

## SUPERB MAN RETURNS

'SHOES TO FILL,' 'FOOTSTEPS TO WALK IN,' AND OTHER RELATED METAPHORS SPRING TO MIND WHEN CONSIDERING AN AMBITIOUS PROJECT AND ONE'S CAPACITY TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS



For Gil Adler one of Hollywood's finest film producers this rang true with Superman Returns. Now a proud notch on his career belt, it is still one of the many facets to the man who is a noted writer, director and producer. More recently Adler's skills have brought him to the attention of the Hollywood International Film Fund, a collaboration between the world's finest financial intellectuals and founder, veteran actor and writer Patrick Kilpatrick, one of Hollywood's finest screen villains. Expanding on such concepts he explains,

"I had been approached before and I usually shy away from funds because I don't think they work, they're usually about not making good movies, either a tax shelter or a scheme to lose money – so not what I want to do."

But this is different and after the initial meetings were over Adler is on board. He adds,

"I thought, "this is secure, they're interested in making good movies, and maybe this would be a good opportunity."

A big fish has been landed, for his fund colleagues 'high fives' are on the menu, for myself the chance to pick the brains of the man who has put the 'Super' into Superman, and has had his fingers in some of the most groundbreaking film and TV pies of recent decades.

Humility might not be the priority, nor the trait of the film industry but sitting inches away from me, it is. Here is a man who has access to 'the button.' From keeping the peace, to maintaining our modesty,

or representing the line that we can or cannot cross, 'the button' is king. He has put 'bums on seats' for years and still he has no concept of the enormity of it all. How does he plead?

"I don't know if I am like that but I am very grateful about what I'm doing. There are a lot of guys trying to do what I do and they have tried and failed. My career has been very, very successful and I'm very grateful."

Somehow I am not convinced, brow knitted I know there's more; surely humility comes from adversity of some sort?

**"When I produce and when I direct I'm totally schizophrenic because the producer beats up the director in me and the director beats up the producer."**

"I lived in New York City and I used to take my dog into Central Park and I'd sit on a rock and talk to squirrels. They gave me the best advice, because everyone else looked at me like I was crazy. My family thought I was nuts, they thought I was a bum. In fact they called me 'the bum.' "

So there's the nugget that breaks my tooth. Gil Adler admits that his decisions to strive weren't based upon misplaced perceptions from youth, but a compulsion to succeed for himself. He jokes,

"I always said that if I ever won an academy award I would thank the squirrels."



Reading between the lines what did they have to say?  
“Just go with your feelings and be true to yourself and don’t let what other people think or say, bother you. Just keep moving.”

And move he has, be that when it comes to inspiring students at the university where he lectures, or the young writers he employs to read the hordes of film scripts he receives. Everything Gil Adler does moves people right down to the home baked chocolate pecan muffins that bring down the house at the local coffee shop.

We have established that Adler’s success has come from his “uniqueness” of being “a better producer” who is able to accommodate directors and re-write scenes if need be. Does this present a dilemma?

“When I produce and when I direct I’m totally

schizophrenic because the producer beats up the director in me and the director beats up the producer.”

I know now to anticipate the flashes of sharp humour that pepper the dialogue; a love of “Monty Python” and his roots within musical comedy emerge,

“I’m a big Broadway west end musical comedy guy - I started out there in New York, I love all that stuff. I could probably sing almost any song from any Broadway play in the last 10 years, right through to Spamalot.”

So I guess that would explain the squirrels.

We enthuse about horror films, share culinary tales and giggle about the boy who raced home to watch Superman lying and “flying on a piece of foam.” Then I feel a gentle tapping telling me to wake up.

“Mr Adler will see you now.”