

Stone delves into JFK assassination



Oliver Stone is preparing to direct a film about the assassination of President Kennedy, tentatively titled "JFK," which is scheduled to start rolling in April in Dallas.

Details of the film are being kept secret, but it will deal in part with the conspiracy charges made by former New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison. Kevin Costner reportedly is being sought as one of the stars, although deals for the film still have not been finalized. One news report in Dallas said the film will offer "an unconventional theory" about the assassination.

Garrison is a judge on the Louisiana 4th Circuit Court of Appeals and has written "On the Trail of the Assassins," his own investigative look at the 1963 Kennedy murder, in which he claims that the CIA was involved in the president's death.

Stone drew a lot of attention in Dallas over the weekend when several thousand Hollywood-struck Texans showed up at the Dallas Convention Center, where the Oscar-winning director of "Platoon" and "Born on the Fourth of July" was holding an open casting session for extras and some speaking parts.

Stone is no newcomer to Dallas when it comes to making movies. He filmed "Talk Radio" there and parts of "Born on the Fourth of July" outside the city. Another reason for filming in Texas is that Stone's wife was born in Houston, and he likes working in the state.

Robert Evans, a classical music host on Dallas' WRR-FM, was one of the many would-be actors who showed up at the audition.

"Stone came into the room where I was, and he looked everybody up and down," Evans said.

It was then that some of the wannabes were selected for the first round, either for speaking or non-speaking parts. Evans said that he

was handed one page from what appeared to be the script and was asked to read some lines. Evans wore a dark blue suit and hat, figuring that he could get a part as an FBI agent or perhaps a newsman.

Evans got one of the call-backs. "I figure I looked like somebody in the film's archives," he said.

Those with speaking parts will receive \$400 a day; non-speaking roles, the so-called faces in the crowd, will get about \$50 a day.

"If I get the part," Evans said, "I am hoping to watch and pick up some acting pointers." He said that he does not believe there will be any animosity in Dallas over this Hollywood look at the Kennedy killing. "Kennedy's assassination is not something that seems to loom over the heads of people here. Most of the people who were involved are dead. I don't think there is any collective guilt. Whatever happened, happened almost 30 years ago. And the people of Dallas were not responsible."

Chip shots

Production is about to begin in Spain on Mario Puzo's latest tale about an Italian superhero, "Christopher Columbus: The Movie." The film is being produced for Universal by Alexander and Ilya Salkind, the folks behind the "Superman" films. The producers have to move fast to get the film ready for distribution next year, in time for the 500th anniversary of Columbus' first voyage to the New World. . . .

Here's one flick that drive-in movie maven Joe Bob Briggs should have a lot of fun with: "Nudist Colony of the Dead," now in production for Pirromount Pictures. . . .

The more things change, the more they stay the same. Four Saudi princes ordered four Mercedes-Benz V12 sedans, which are expected to cost about \$100,000 each, once they become available at Beverly Hills Mercedes. The shipping charges and insurance to send the cars to Saudi

Arabia is a mere \$26,000 — per car.

Kevin Costner is the keynote speaker for the Independent Feature Project West's annual Spirit Awards March 23 at the Beverly Hills Hotel. The awards honor the best independent films of the year. Edward Pressman, who produced such films as "Wall Street" and "Talk Radio" will receive the John Cassavetes Award for his body of work. Also being honored is San Francisco filmmaker Jon Jost, whose works are being featured in a retrospective at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Buckeroo

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar hasn't given up his longstanding quest to be an actor. The former Lakers star shows up Saturday night on CBS' "Uncle Buck," which stars comedian Kevin Meaney.

"He is very serious about it," said Meaney about Abdul-Jabbar, whose guest episode will be broadcast Saturday.

But Abdul-Jabbar is not too serious to be funny on the set. When one of the kids on the show looked up at the giant ex-athlete, she said, "You're really, really tall." Abdul-Jabbar, looking down at the child responded, "You're really, really short."

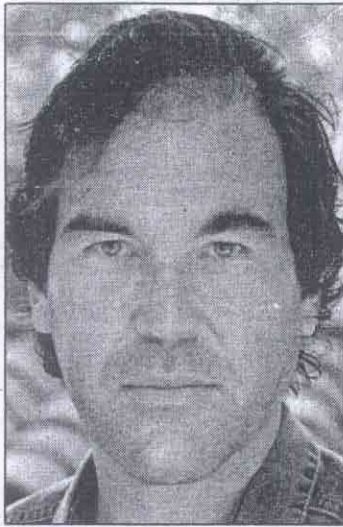
Meaney then asked the young actress if she knew who Abdul-Jabbar was. "No," she replied.

"How soon they forget," Abdul-Jabbar said.

Meaney, an actor who became a stand-up who became an actor again for the series, said starring in a sitcom has been a learning experience. "In stand-up, you work alone on a stage; now you work with other actors. In stand-up, you are used to doing things your own way; now you have to do it other people's way. It gets a little aggravating. But the producers and directors are right. They know the character.

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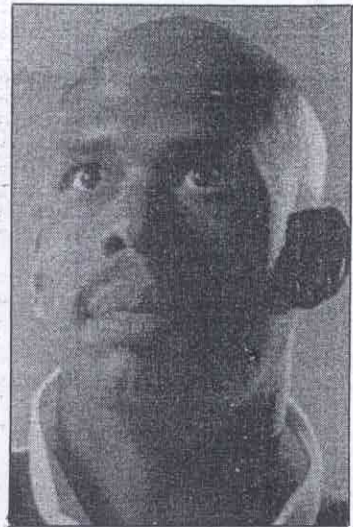
HAVE YOU HEARD?



Oliver Stone
Filming in Dallas



Kevin Meany
"Uncle Buck" star



Kareem Abdul-Jabbar
Serious about acting

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