

Exclusive: Red-Carpet ‘Drunkboat’ Portraits at 2010 Chicago International Film Festival

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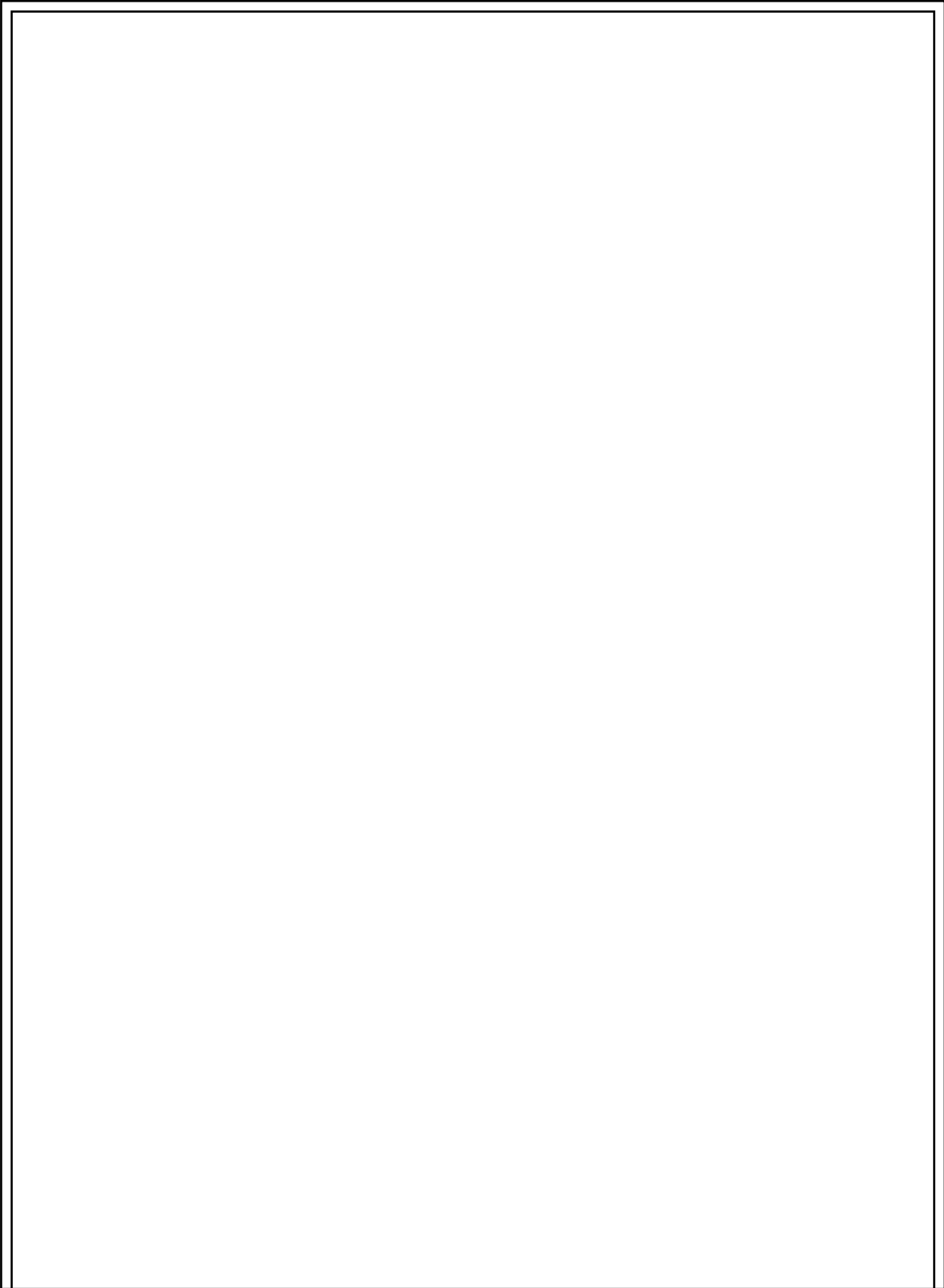
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CHICAGO – One of the genuine thrills of the Chicago International Film Festival is the local premiere. The film ‘Drunkboat’ was shot in Chicago, directed by Bob Meyer, and featuring John Malkovich, John Goodman, Dana Delany, Jim Ortlieb and Jacob Zachar. The Red Carpet Premiere was last Friday, October 8th.

Walking the carpet was blustery film producer Chase Bailey, two featured performers of Drunkboat – Jim Ortlieb and Jacob Zachar (of the ABC Family series “Greek”) – and Director Bob Meyer. HollywoodChicago.com captured interviews with all of them.

Jacob Zachar, Abe in “Drunkboat”

The young actor Jacob Zachar has already made a mark playing Rusty Cartwright in the popular ABC Family Series “Greek.” In Drunkboat, he gets the privilege of working opposite Dana Delaney, John Malkovich and John Goodman.





Jacob Zachar at the Chicago International Film Festival, October 8th, 2010

Photo credit: Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com

HollywoodChicago.com: This is the first film you ever shot. How did this experience prepared you for your subsequent TV and film roles?

Jacob Zachar: Well, it helped. This was my first film and they threw me up with the top dogs, the big actors. There was a lot of heads-up in that and I really had to listen to them. It's a different film, and that's different from theater, other films and television.

HC: Let's talk about your work on TV in 'Greek.' Since you are the lead, what techniques have you developed to help keep the rest of the cast and crew loose?

JZ: Lead by example, I guess. I think if the crew shows up happy and everyone knows their lines, and gets done on time enough to go see their family, then everyone is going to be happy. [laughs]

HC: Now that you've played him for three years, what future do you anticipate for Rusty Cartwright?

JZ: The last 10 episodes will start in January and then we wrap it up. I don't know where I see the guy, where do you see yourself in ten years? [laughs]

HC: Now that you're making the transition from youth roles to adult roles, what type of characters would you like to be considered for?

JZ: I read everything that comes my way, but you always want to try something that scares you, that digs deep inside to, that people respond to. But especially something that scares you.



Jim Ortlieb, Morley in 'Drunkboat'

This veteran Chicago stage performer has had many film and TV character roles over the years, in titles like "The Babe," "ER", "Will & Grace," "Spin City," "Six Feet Under" and "A Mighty Wind."



Jim Orlieb at the Chicago International Film Festival, October 8th, 2010
Photo credit: Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com

HC: There are themes of the effect of the Vietnam War in this film. What was your own experiences as you came of age during the era of that war?

Jim Orlieb: It's a big question. The year I graduated high school I was 113 on the draft lottery. That was the year they stopped the draft. The Vietnam War was something I grew up with, and 1968 was a huge year for me. It was a fucking mess. It made those growing up years very emotional in many ways.

HC: In accordance with with writer/director Bob Meyer's vision for Drunkboat, what kind of rhythm did he want to establish for the actors?

JO: He's a very intrusive director, in a good way. Rhythm is very important for this piece, because language has a lot to do with the story. That is the tip of the iceberg as far as what is going on underneath. It's a really a lovely, rhymic film. The tension rides on the fence with the language, you never know where the language is going to go.

Working with John Goodman was great, most of my scenes were with Goodman. He came into it blind, and the first day we worked together he asked me how long I had known Bob Meyers. At that point, it had been 20 years.

HC: What aspect of your character did you understand the most. In researching the role, did you work on back story or allow the natural story rhythms to establish your character?

JO: I came into parenthood late in life, I was about 40 years old when I had my first. And this was about parenthood for me, the beginnings of parenthood. Even as much as you think I'm a hood in this film, I do come to the realization that I should be responsible. I think that is what it's about.

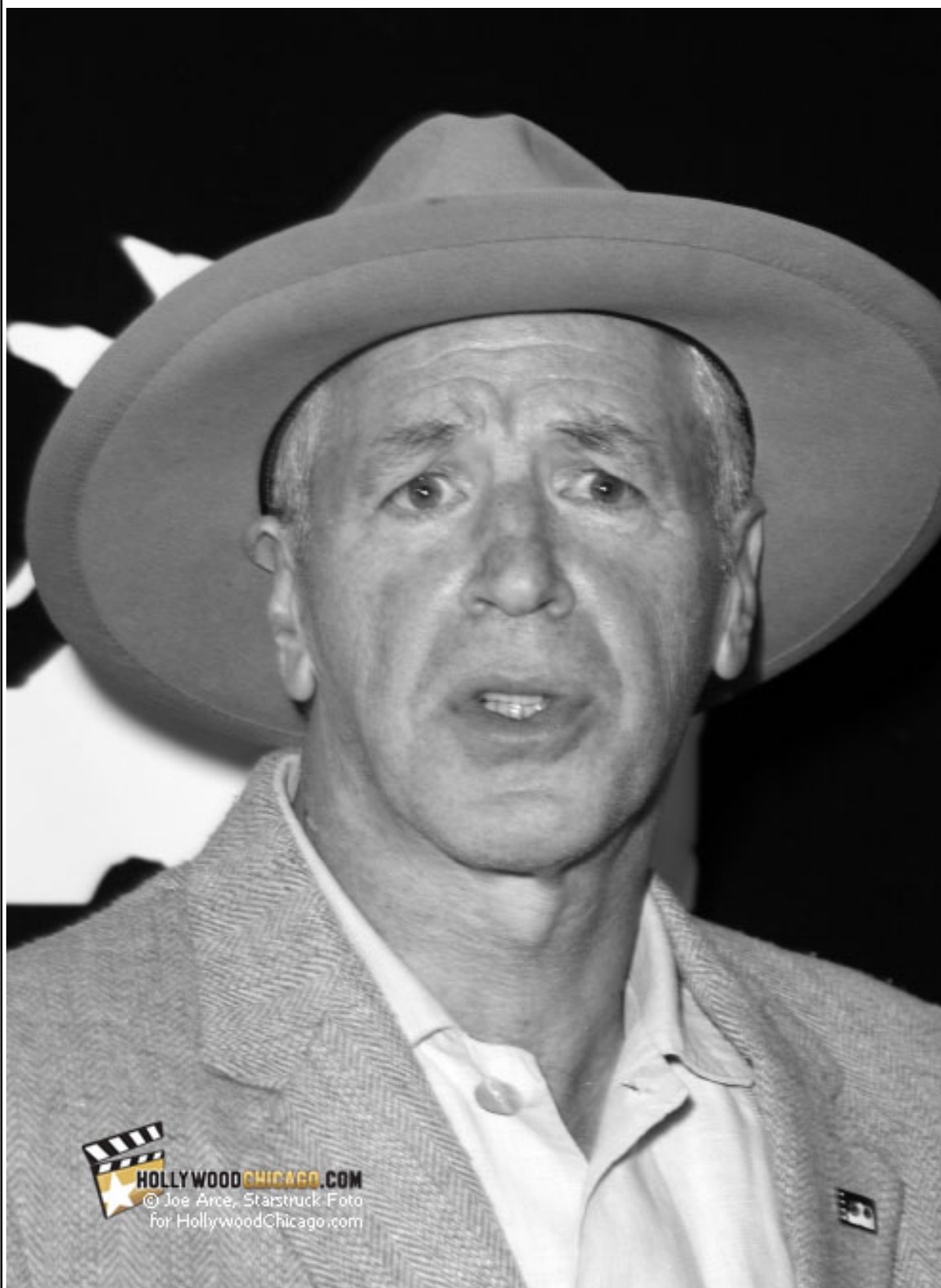
HC: Finally, you got to observe and experience a movie set directed by Christopher Guest in 'A Mighty Wind.' What was most compelling about his technique, was it just another day at the office or was there challenging parameters?

JO: Most of the technique came for the 35 page script that I got beforehand. Which really wasn't a script, as much as a scene-by-scene treatment. And once I got to the set, the old adage of 'death is easy, comedy is hard' is exactly the way that set lived.



Bob Meyer, Director of 'Drunkboat'

'Drunkboat' began it's life as a stage play, written by Bob Meyer. He makes his film directorial debut with the adaptation of his play.



'Drunkboat' Director Bob Meyer, the Chicago International Film Festival, October 8th, 2010

Photo credit: Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com

HC: What was the greatest challenge of adapting Drunkboat from stage to screen?

Bob Meyer: I took it on regarding its own merits as a screenplay. It began as a story, that became a play and then it got its own life as a screenplay once John Malkovich and John Goodman came on board. I adapted it to their characterizations, and it seemed to hold together pretty good that way.

HC: What was your experiences and attitude towards the Vietnam War, since it's used as a theme in Drunkboat?

BM: My brother went to Vietnam, and I didn't. And that really was the genesis of the story. Why did all my guys go and I didn't? I had to deal with that in some kind of way. Was I politically astute or was I chicken? Luckily everybody came back. It wasn't a Vietnam movie, but it was about the individuals who deal with that era.

HC: What moment on the set was most compelling to you. What day or moment stood out?

BM: I just talked to John Goodman about that. We had enough time to go under one the boats, the beautiful boats. He came in late on the project, but he loved the lines and learned them. He did it, and he was really proud of it and really happy. And then I had to tell him it was all wrong. He was like 'what, man?' And I told him it was completely opposite, but I explained it and he took it in. He did it like I asked, and I broke down under that boat, even he broke down. Then he did it for the film. On the set, that probably was the hottest time.

**Chase Bailey, Executive Producer of 'Drunkboat'**

Chase Bailey is full of life, exactly what you'd expect a major film producer to be like. Besides Drunkboat, he has produced the Johnny Depp film, "The Libertine" [2004] and the recent "The Life Before Her Eyes" [2007].

HC: How did you get involved with Drunkboat and what fascinated you about the story that made you want to participate?

Chase Bailey: I working with John Malkovich in Paris, and he introduced me to this crazy man named Bob Meyer. He had written the play Drunkboat by that time and it was picked up a producer but lingered for five or six years. John and I looked at each other in London years later, after I had filmed The Libertine, and I said I would try to get Drunkboat going, because I loved the script. I wanted to get it out from under the other producer, I gave the guy a call and asked to buy the rights of the script.

HC: Tell me about your own attitude or experience toward the Vietnam conflict, a theme in Drunkboat.

CB: I don't like to talk about 'Nam. I was a Marine there from 1967 to 1971, and I don't like to talk about it.

HC: Are the Vietnam veterans sort of becoming the forgotten men because of our recent wars?

CB: Of course, it's really ugly. That war should have been forgotten a long time ago, it should have been forgotten when we did it. It was just 50,000 lives lost for no f**king reason.

HC: Finally, what's your next project?

CB: I'm working with a couple producers from Los Angeles. I bought the rights to the book, 'The Tent,' by Gary Paulsen. We just got Dennis Quaid attached, so we're hoping to shoot it next year in May, because it's a West Texas story.

The 46th Chicago International Film Festival is October 7th-21st, 2010. For more information and to purchase tickets, click on ChicagoFilmFestival.com [14]



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