

INSIDE OUT

Journey to the land of special effects

Gimmicks hinder film version of classic Jules Verne novel, **J2**



Get spooked

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Crack: We're all like them

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A man had come by with a picture of his daughter. He knew she was on the corner and wanted to find her, take her for treatment. Nancy knew the girl, where to find her. She took the man to his daughter, he put her in the car, rescued her.

At this point in the story, Nancy started to cry. I asked her what was wrong — after all, she helped save that girl. Nancy told me, through tears, that she, too, had a 16-year-old daughter, addicted. The authorities had just taken her baby away because she wouldn't go for treatment.

That one short story encapsulates many of the complexities of that corner. A thief who was caught and punished, who underneath it all has a kind of honour and concern, too. Wants to help. Only it's often easier to help others than it is to help yourself.

And I don't think that that dynamic is particular to that corner or those addicts. Seems to me that it's just the hu-

man condition.

Then, a couple of Sundays ago, I was back down on the corner, shooting. I use a small Honda generator to power my light when I'm working there. It's about the size of a sewing machine and weighs 25 pounds.

There were the usual subjects down there that day, but a whole lot of strangers as well.

After I'd finished shooting I turned off the generator and started talking to Jennifer, an addict I'd just photographed. About 30 seconds later I looked over and the generator was gone, stolen. Seems one of the strangers took it. Had a look around but it was long gone. Man, I kissed that thousand bucks goodbye.

Before I left I gave my number to a few of the addicts I know, asked them to get in touch if the generator showed up. I get home and about 30 minutes later my phone rings. It's Keith, one of the people I'd given my number to. He had found my generator. What are the chances of that happening? When was

the last time you heard about crack addicts recovering and returning stolen property?

I didn't ask Keith any questions about where he found the genny, or who had stolen it. Just thanked him and he walked away before I could give him any reward money. Seems that's not the reason he found and returned my property.

I think my property was returned because, in a way, I'm one of them.

If you looked at the people and culture that exist down on that corner, with just a tiny shift in your perspective, you'd see that in many ways you're one of them, too.

Tony Fohse's photographs are at Le Petite Mort Gallery, 306 Cumberland St. in the ByWard Market. Four of his photos from the crack series are also on display as part of the group exhibition Evidence: The Ottawa City Project, at the Ottawa Art Gallery, 2 Daly Ave., until Nov. 16. Fohse's website is tonyfoto.com.



TONY FOUHSE

Crack addicts like Jennifer reveal the complexities of the street corner.