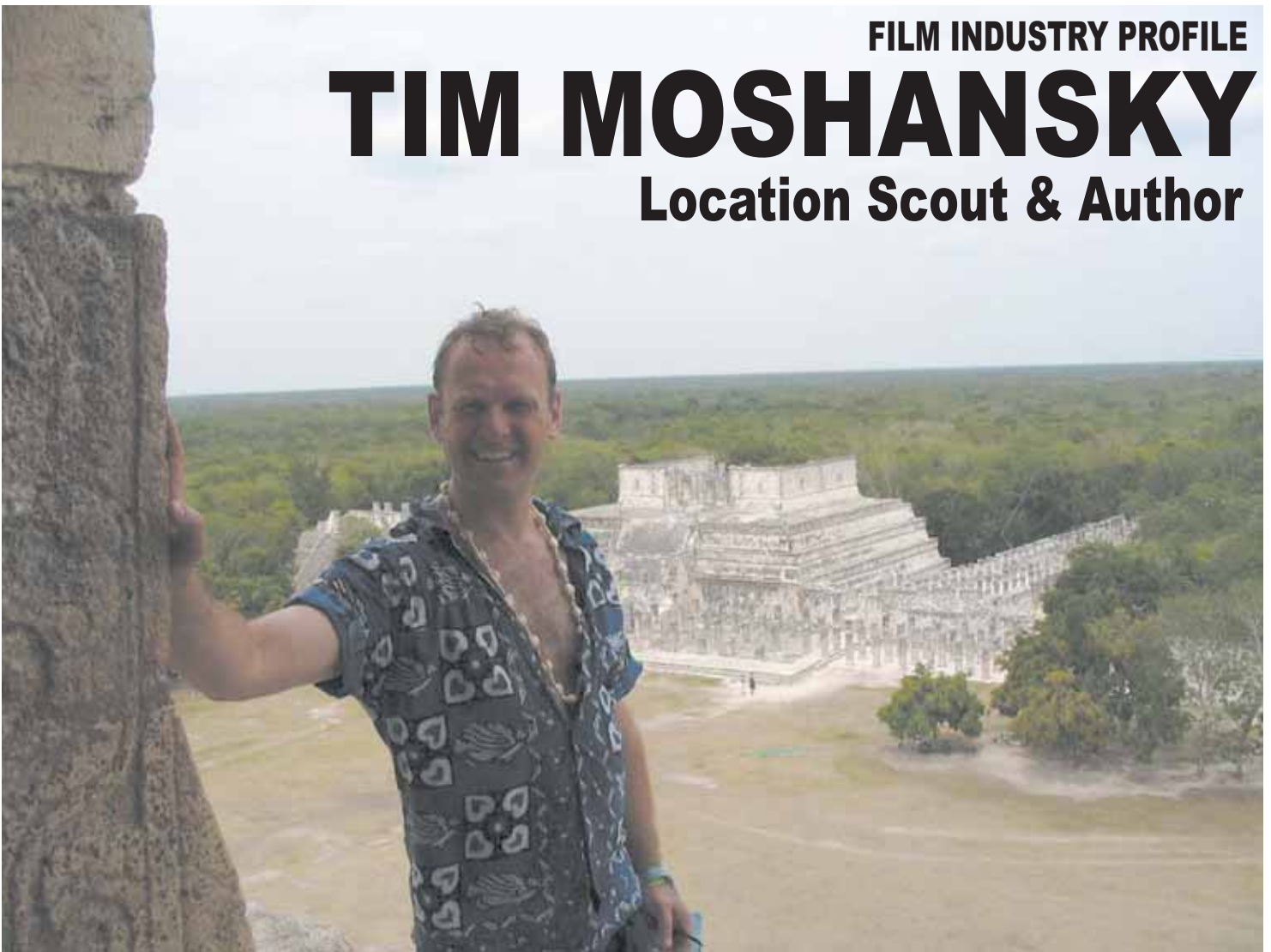


TIM MOSHANSKY

Location Scout & Author



CONDENSED BIOGRAPHY

Tim got his first portable tape recorder (with a condenser mike) in 1977 at the age of 12. That same year he saw Star Wars at the theater nine times. (They didn't have VCRs yet).

In 1981 while in Grade 12, a movie was filmed at Tim's high school St. Michael's University School (Paul Almond's feature about life at a boarding school Ups and Downs). Tim was involved as an extra in several scenes.

In 1989 Tim was hired as a squad sergeant/production assistant on the Japanese samurai epic, Heaven and Earth. He was a squad sergeant for 40 soldier extras. The movie used a total of 2500 extras in costume and 500 horses. It was his first "real" movie job.

In 1993 Tim began writing freelance, "stringer" articles for Mix Magazine based in Emeryville, California. Since this time he has written dozens of articles for Mix as well as Post Magazine, Professional Sound and Canadian Musician.

In 1995 Tim became a member of the Director's Guild of Canada. That same year he also began work as a location scout and published the first edition of the A to Z Guide to Film Terms.

Tim currently lives in Lions Bay, BC with his wife Wendy and their dog and two cats.

Insight caught up with Tim on a hot spring day to have a chat about the movie industry and working as a location scout:

Insight: You've worked as a location scout for over 10 years now. How did you get into doing that?

TM: I guess it was a natural evolution from working as a locations production assistant. After a few years of working on set, I was given an opportunity to do some scouting, and I loved it right away. I didn't think I'd be doing it 10 years later.

Insight: It sounds like a cool job. How does it all work?

TM: I usually get a call from a P.M. or L.M. at the beginning of a new show, and then go and meet with the Director, Producer and Production Designer to determine what the priorities are for locations. Sometimes I read the script, sometimes not, but we always have a meeting by phone or in person to brainstorm and get a firm grasp on the concepts they're after. Then off I go to try and find the perfect locations. Of course each project is different and there are often many parameters for the scout. A classic example is this one: "We need a house from the 1960's that's small on the outside and large on the inside with a large tree in the backyard that you can see from the kitchen window and we prefer an open floor plan and the DP doesn't like white walls. Oh, and can you find it within a half block of the studio?"

Insight:What is your favourite part of scouting?

TM: I love the fact that it's something new almost everyday, that I have a certain level of independence and freedom that's rare in this industry. I'm kind of a natural explorer and adventurer and I love the thrill of finding the perfect spot for a certain scene. The best is when they rent you a 4x4 and send you out on the road for a week out of town in search of great locations. I've been really fortunate to have been able to go to Whistler dozens of times and other parts of the interior. It's often like getting paid to go and have an adventure. That happened just recently on the new Robin Williams movie "RV." I got sent to Whistler for a week, all expenses paid, no clock to punch, nobody telling me what to do. Just find the perfect spot.

Insight:What's the craziest thing you've ever done on the job?

TM: I remember once scouting on the series Mysterious Ways, where I did two seasons. One day I was at the PNE and it was off-season with no one around. I was given authorization to wander around and take pictures of the grounds. Then I thought I could get a great view if I climbed to the top of the old, wooden roller-coaster. So I climbed up there and took a bunch of shots. When I got back down, I was in fairly big trouble from the PNE people. Apparently no-one is allowed up there, not even the staff. When I got back to the office my L.M. said, "So, how was the roller coaster?"

Insight:What's the funniest thing that's happened?

TM: There's lots of funny moments, but I remember one that was quite good. We primarily work with digital photography now, but back a few years ago, when we were still using film, a Production Designer whom I hadn't worked with before gave me a roll of film to get developed. Later that day I picked up my shots as well as those of the PD. AS I was looking through the photos, there was an entire roll of nude pictures of a young woman. They were all quite artistic and not dirty by any means, and I thought, "Well, this guy has an interesting hobby." My perception of him changed immediately, and I wasn't sure if I should just give him the photos and not say anything or what. As it turned out, there had been a mix-up at the lab and those were the lab owner's wife's shots for her photography class. When I told the PD and my LM we all got a good laugh out of it.

Insight: What advice would you give to someone who might be interested in becoming a location scout?

TM: Work on set for awhile as a PA to get a firm grasp of what filming on location is all about. From the time the trucks move in at dawn to when you wrap after sunset, there is a lot that goes on. Work on set and try to meet as many Location Managers as you can. As for the actual day to day job requirements, I think it's good to have the following: a good handle on digital photography and computer skills; a good car that won't break down; good PR skills; a knowledge of story and scripts; a creative mind, and a knowledge of the geographical area you're in. Keep a good attitude and remember that it takes a long time to build up the contacts necessary to keep the jobs rolling in. In this industry there's a saying, "You're only as good as you're last show."

Stand by, picture's up! Cameras are rolling. Scene 24, take 2, A and B camera common mark...Speed! And...Action!

For more information or to order the A to Z Guide to Film Terms, visit www.filmterms.com

What would you do if you were on a movie set and the assistant director came up to you and asked:

"Can you go to the circus and look for the first team before they check the gate on the Abby? We've got a blocking coming up, and they're just about finished greeking the hero location before the magic hour steadicam POV shot. We're going M.O.S. on the next take, so stand by with the stand-ins until we can work out this pull focus so we won't have to push the call time or do French Hours next week. Copy that? Oh, and do you know where the honeywagons are? I've got to go 10-100."

Confused?

If you had the A to Z Guide to Film Terms in your back pocket, you wouldn't be. This best-selling pocket-sized film phrase book has helped thousands of film students, movie buffs and industry professionals figure out what the heck crews are talking about on film sets.

Tim Moshansky had just graduated from UVIC with a BA in English/Film and got a job as a P.A. on a Vancouver movie set. (Directly from BA to PA) His first job? Watching a parking lot for 14 hours a day. With all of this extra time on his hands, Tim began compiling all of the strange terms and phrases he was hearing over the walkie-talkie. The result is a unique book that has become an industry standard in the film community.

Book Description:

Have you ever wondered what it's like to work in the movie industry? Do you watch the credits for a film and wonder what a grip or a gaffer is or what they do? Do you want to learn the behind-the-scenes lingo used by the cast and crew?

With the A to Z Guide to Film Terms, you're sure to be talking like Steven Spielberg in a hurry.

Over the last 10 years Tim has worked as a location scout for scores of TV shows, feature films and commercials, and has lots of fascinating behind-the-scenes stories. As anyone who's been in it knows, it's a crazy business.

