


Woody Allen, Jenny McCarthy
AND OTHER STARS SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Famous



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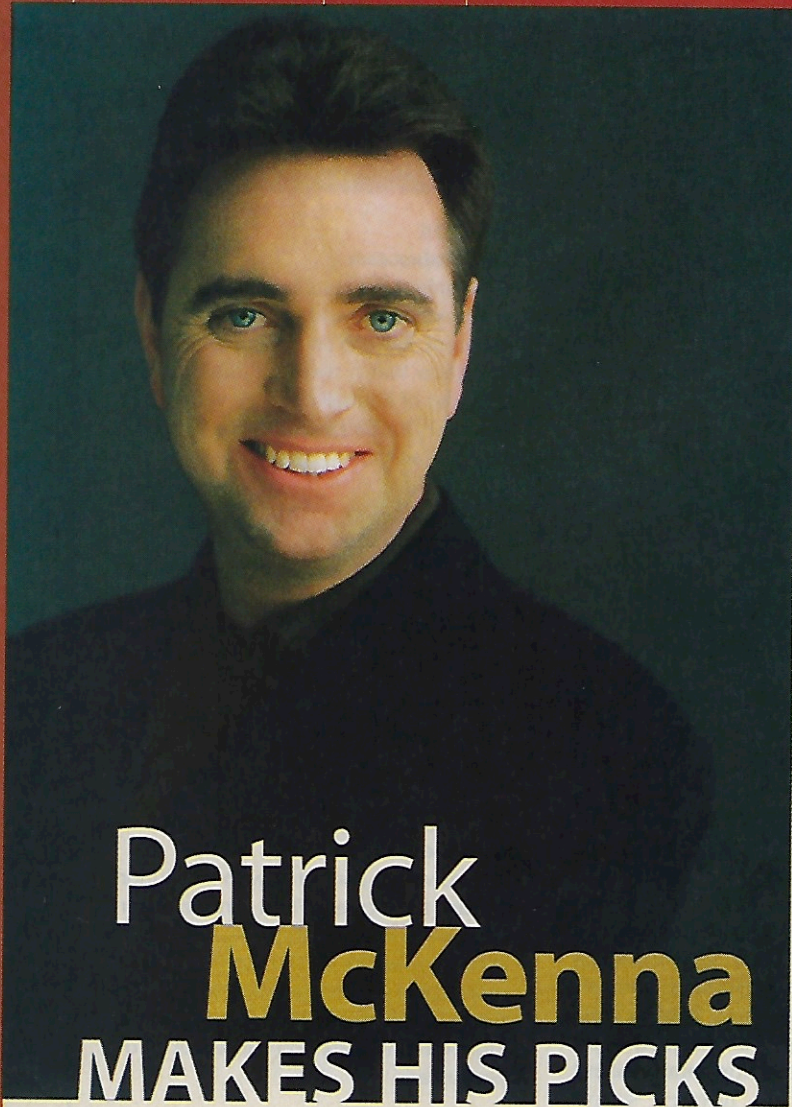
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Patrick McKenna MAKES HIS PICKS

Patrick McKenna has come to be known as one of Canada's most versatile actors. Back in the mid-'90s, the amiable Second City alumnus surprised everyone when he decided to split his time between playing Harold, the terminally nerdy nephew on *The Red Green Show*, and obnoxious, high-rolling stockbroker Marty Stephens on TV's *Traders*. But now McKenna has turned his attention to movies. There's a *Red Green* film in the works, and when McKenna did this interview he was on hiatus from shooting *Punch and Judy*, a romantic comedy from Ottawa-based Distinct Features, which stars Graham Greene and Brigitte Robinson as an unlikely pair who find true love. McKenna plays Judy's unsavory ex-boyfriend who refuses to give her up. And if that wasn't enough to keep him busy, McKenna has just sold his first film, a comedy called *Those Guys*, which he wrote for himself and fellow Canuck Colin Mochrie. "We call it *Abbott and Costello meets The Fugitive*," he says. Here McKenna shares his most-beloved flicks, talks about the new movies and what he's doing for Valentine's Day.

WHAT ARE YOUR FIVE FAVOURITE FILMS?

"Number one is *Goodfellas* [1990]. I love it because it's like Hamilton [Ont.] in the late Seventies, which is where I grew up. For me it really captured an era and a style of person and character that I was very familiar with. There was a big mob presence in Hamilton — the Hamilton-Buffalo-Montreal circuit. And I think

De Niro gave the strongest performance I've seen him give, charismatic and yet scary. • Number two is *The Ghost and Mr. Chicken* [1965]. It's a comedy with Don Knotts about a guy who's dared to stay in a haunted house overnight. It's a Sunday afternoon movie that I used to watch as a kid and I see it now and laugh, going 'I remember that movie.' It's like a Scooby-Doo adventure. • Number three is *The In-Laws* [1979] with Peter Falk and Alan Arkin. I really love stories where an Everyman is dragged into an extreme situation, and that's what happens to Alan Arkin when he meets the father of his son-in-law-to-be [Falk] who drags him to Central America on this crazy mission. • Number four is *Lady and the Tramp* [1955]. It was the first film that I saw my son, Brendon, laugh at, and that kind of stuck with me. He was about three at the time. We both found that Peggy Lee made a very hot dog, and we both laughed at the same parts, which was kind of cool. You realize that a sense of humour is in the genes. • Number five is *A Night at the Opera* [1935], the Marx Brothers movie. A family goes from Europe to New York on this steamship at the same time as this opera company is coming across. They're all stow aways who try and hide amongst the passengers. It's just the Marx Brothers at the height of their zaniness. And the great music. You've got opera and the Marx Brothers — you've gotta laugh."

OF ALL THE CHARACTERS YOU'VE PLAYED, WHICH IS CLOSEST TO YOUR PERSONALITY?

"Ahhh...probably Marty from *Traders*. I think it's again that Everyman quality in a sort of a world where you're not sure you fit in. I'm like that with acting a little bit — I'm kind of a practical kind of a guy and it's more of an artsy type of environment. Sometimes I find I'm out of sync with it."

BECAUSE YOU COME FROM A COMEDY BACKGROUND?

"Yeah, I think that's a big part of it. I learned to act through [*Traders*]. I didn't bring those tools with me. So it was a learning curve where I always felt on the outside 'cause I had to be myself as much as I could — certainly exaggerated — but there were times when it just had to be me."

YOUR PUNCH AND JUDY CHARACTER IS DESCRIBED IN THE PRESS MATERIAL AS "SLEAZY." DO YOU AGREE WITH THAT?

"Yeah, he's a manipulator. He takes his power and uses it for evil instead of good. He's one of those people I loathe. Anyone who has status over someone and they abuse it, I hate that. So that's what made me think it would be fun to play. If you loathe them then that's a strong enough emotion that you can buy into. I don't have to agree with it, but I can play it."

TELL ME ABOUT THE RED GREEN MOVIE.

"Harold and Red go on a road trip to a duct tape contest to try and save the lodge. I think the script is all finished and we start shooting the first week in May and then we'll wrap up about the second week of June. It will be a theatrical release, then Steve [Smith, who plays Red Green] says it'll go straight to video. So if you don't catch it in that one theatre where it's airing it will be on video for Christmas."

WHAT ARE YOU DOING FOR VALENTINE'S DAY?

"Valentine's Day is the day I asked my wife to marry me so we like to have a winter picnic at the place where we first got engaged."

—Marni Weisz