

Directors flabbergasted as Victorians flock to casting calls

WHEN OPEN CASTING calls go out in this city, aspiring Nicholsons and Pfeiffers respond in such high numbers and with such enthusiasm that film and television directors are often flabbergasted.

This was the case again a couple of weeks ago when 425 hopefuls responded to an invitation in these pages to try out for a spot in a series of Kokanee commercials.

The stampede came just two months after an estimated crowd of 800 showed up in response to a Columbia Pictures casting call for *Little Women*.

"The phone started ringing at 6:30 in the morning, just after most people were getting their paper, and it didn't stop," recalled a nonplussed Barbara Coultish, the Victoria casting agent hired to screen local talent for Rob Thomas, the Hollywood commercial veteran directing the spots for Vancouver's Cactus Productions.

The producers were seeking athletic types who could pass for 21, especially thrill-seekers involved in daredevil sports like bungee-jumping or hang-gliding. And, by all accounts, they were knocked out by what they saw.

They were also surprised and pleased with the strong female



■ NICHOLSON IN *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, which plays Saturday at Eric Martin Pavilion.

turnout, said Coultish, who was forced to extend the duration of the casting call to the following day to accommodate the throngs.

Callbacks for short-listed candidates took place last week. They were scheduled to have wrapped up in Vancouver by press time.

The casting people discovered more than just unvarnished talent during their local sweep — chiefly

the offbeat sports activities favored by some of the candidates.

One activity that drew laughs and looks of disbelief was frisbee golf, a wacky, self-explanatory variation on the treasured classic. It's becoming so popular, say sports buffs, that courses are popping up all over the U.S.

A frisbee golf course has also reportedly been created on

Pender Island, and a task force newsletter on the use of surplus land north of the Hartland Landfill two years ago proposed such a course as a recreational alternative.

Does this mean we'll be seeing attractive thrill-seekers playing frisbee golf between gulps of a cold one on the next Kokanee commercial?

Stay tuned.

PRODUCTION UPDATE: The producer and director of *Broken Trust* were scheduled to arrive in town today to check out locations for the made-for-TV courtroom drama starring Tom Selleck, according to industry sources.

The film-makers were to look at spots — including the Legislature — that could double as a historic courthouse for the Turner Network Television production.

If they like what they see and the number-crunching works, *Broken Trust* could go before the cameras for a few days as early as next month.

We'll keep you posted.

liantly portrayed by Nicholson. Seating is limited, and there's no admission charge. Organizer Bruce Saunders advises early arrival to avoid disappointment. Donations are welcome.

Michael D. Reid's Behind the Screen column appears Fridays in Entertainment.

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