

Louis Cyr ~ Le Film

Police Gazette Stars in Major Movie Release

The title of "strongest man in the world" has always had a mythic quality to it. It comes with the territory. The strongest man is the closest we mere mortals come to the super hero of our imagination. What small boy never once dreams at one time or another of being able to lift, break or bend something no one else has the ability to? Every comic-book hero and villain is able to do something beyond a normal human's capacity. In some, the yearning to be that person who towers above all others never fades. Competitions for the "strongest man in the world" still occur today, and if the strongman field has a Babe Ruth, a Wayne Gretzky, a Michael Jordan, it is Louis Cyr.

Louis Cyr was born in Quebec in 1863 and showed exceptional strength from an early age. His rise and remarkable feats have been chronicled in a number of books, most notably Paul Ohl's *Louis Cyr: Une Epopée Légendaire*. It was this book that finally inspired the Canadian film industry to bring to the screen the story of one of that country's most unique citizens. The book, at this time, is not yet in English. But that is likely to change as the buzz for *Louis Cyr* in Canada is rising to a fever pitch. An English version of the film is already set to go for the English-speaking parts of Canada, and plans are for a worldwide distribution.

So why is the *Police Gazette* making such a fuss over some French-Canadian movie? Because it was the *Police Gazette* that made Mr. Louis Cyr a worldwide star in the first place. The strongman had been a regional hit in



Louis Cyr

The Canadian weightlifter and showman who put strongman competitions on the map. Cyr was helped to become an American and international star by the *Police Gazette* and its owner Richard K. Fox. Christal Films has brought Cyr's story to the screen in a big-budget feature being released this month.



Courtesy of Les Films Christal

Antoine Bertrand as Louis Cyr

A popular Canadian actor, Bertrand is honored to be part of telling Louis Cyr's story.

Quebec and New England. But Richard K. Fox, the *Police Gazette's* late-19th-century owner, saw something in the fledgling Hercules and took the strongman under his wing. Fox, using the national and international reach of the *Gazette*, brought Louis Cyr to the masses. Fox even went so far as to personally accompany Cyr to England and introduce him to an amazed European audience.

As a result, Richard K. Fox and the *Police Gazette* have significant roles in the new movie. Fox is being portrayed by Gil Bellows who may be best known for his role as Tommy Williams in *The Shawshank Redemption*, but has also appeared with Nicolas Cage in *The Weather Man* and Samuel L. Jackson in *Unthinkable*, as well as in a recurring role on the *Ally McBeal* TV show. National Police Gazette Enterprises, LLC, which publishes the Binghamton/Ithaca series *Police Gazette*, assisted the filmmakers by providing images of authentic *Gazettes* from the time period as well as photos of the interior and exterior of the famed *Police Gazette* Building that once stood in Manhattan next to the Brooklyn Bridge.

A gala premiere for the *Louis Cyr* film is being held July 8th at the Place des Arts—the Lincoln Center of Montreal. An afterparty will take place at the spectacular Marché Bonsecours, one of Canada's 10 finest heritage buildings. And, as with the *Parker* premiere in January, we will be there. Current *Police Gazette* publisher Steven Westlake and Culture Editor Judith Excellent have been invited, so look for a full report in the August issue.