

LIGHTS! CAMERA! CALGARY!

Smoking Man no fan of sci-fi

X-Files actor filming short here



ALEXANDRA
BURROUGHS

For better or worse, William B. Davis is best known as The Cigarette Smoking Man.

The 66-year-old Vancouver-based actor has dozens of other credits to his name, including work as both a writer and a director, but ever since his character appeared on the X-Files in 1993, The Cigarette Smoking Man has been the actor's trademark, making him a legend to those hooked on the Space Channel.

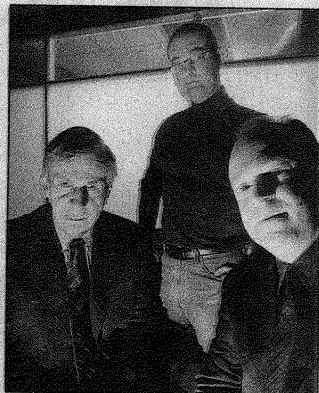
Oddly, Davis quit smoking in the '70s, and, as for science fiction, he doesn't have much time for it.

"For all the time I spent on

X-Files, you'd think I would be, but no, I'm not a sci-fi fan," says Davis, who's in Calgary to film another sci-fi project entitled Cost of Living by local filmmaker Jonathan Joffe.

"With this film, it's not the sci-fi factor that got me, it's the human factor."

SEE SMOKING, PAGE D2



Stuart Gradon, Calgary Herald
William B. Davis, left,
with fellow actor Andrew
Krivanek, right, and
director Jonathan Joffe.

FROM DI SMOKING

Cost of Living is a 9-minute short film about a man (Davis) who tries to buy a replacement body after he is diagnosed with terminal cancer. Since he doesn't have enough money to pay for the new body, he has to decide whether he is willing to die or sell himself into slavery to pay for it.

For Joffe, who's first significant short film, Young Rocket Samurai, screened at the 2002 Calgary International Film Festival and has since been picked up by the Space Channel, obtaining Davis for the role was a Sci-Fi coo.

"He's perfect," says Joffe, 32, who's been working in the local film industry for 10 years. "Hopefully with Bill on board I can get into more festivals and get more interest from broadcasters."

Cost of Living is a low-budget movie that Joffe is personally funding, so most people on set are volunteering their time. From the boom microphone guy to the director of photography, the sound woman to the hairstylist, each person on set is there because they want to help out a fellow film enthusiast. That includes Davis, who's working at a significantly reduced rate.

"I'm not sure how it works in Calgary, but in Vancouver we do a lot of this to help each other out," says Davis. "I do my own shorts and people have donated their time to help me do that. This is a way of giving back.

"We're all sort of trying to generate indigenous Canadian activities so we do what we can."