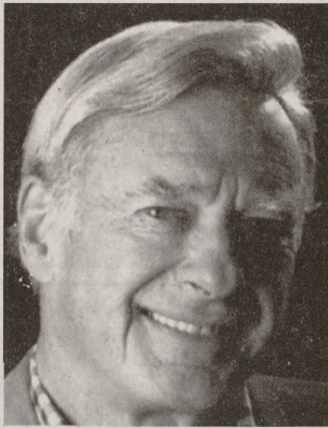




## Director John Frankenheimer

INTERVIEW BY MATT MCCORMICK  
AND KYLE WHITACRE  
The Battalion



John Frankenheimer is one of the last of his kind. A feature film director who actually got his start directing live television shows in the '50s, Frankenheimer went on to direct cinematic classics such as *Birdman of Alcatraz* and *The Manchurian Candidate*. After a long run as one of Hollywood's most successful directors, Frankenheimer lost his edge. He went through a dark period in his life, and many of his films flopped. Then Frankenheimer reemerged with the critically-acclaimed *Ronin*. Now the 70-year-old director is trying to regain a firm footing in Tinseltown with release of the upcoming adventure-thriller *Reindeer Games*, starring Ben Affleck, Gary Sinise and Charlize Theron. In an interview with the director, Frankenheimer spoke with *The Battalion* about his career and his new movie.

**Q:** What really attracted you to *Reindeer Games*?

I loved the script. I read the script, and I thought how well written it was, how smart. I thought the characters were terribly well written, well shaped and well formed. Particularly Ben and Charlize had characters who changed from beginning to end. I liked the dialogue.

I thought the dialogue was very good, and I liked the humor. I thought the humor was wonderful. That's one of the reasons I cast Ben, and I wanted to get the humor of this thing — and [Ben] is able to do that.

I liked the whole background — Northern Michigan, the winter and the snow. I liked the fact that it was kind of this dirtball American type of guy. It was a real departure from Paris and Nice which was where my last movie was.

**Q:** What sort of budget did you have on this picture? It seemed a little smaller, for example, than *Ronin*.

I don't know why you would think it was smaller. We had everything we needed to do this picture. We didn't compromise anything. I really never even worry about a budget in a picture because so much of the budget in pictures is wasted money. In reality, any movie you do, you are out there trying to get the most of what you can get out every day. You are struggling to get the shot and get it as quickly as you can.

**Q:** How much did you have to work with Ben and Gary to get their great chemistry?

They are both good actors. The parts were well written, and that has a lot to do with it. They took off each other quite well. They got along very well; there was not any one-upmanship on this picture. It was a lot of hard work. We rehearsed a lot, so yeah we worked on all those values.

**Q:** Where did the title *Reindeer Games* come from?

If you talk to Ehren Kruger, the writer, he says he started off with a title and then he wrote a story. He came up with it. Originally, the picture was supposed to come out around Dec. 10, but I just plain wasn't ready. When I told Bob Weinstein that I couldn't have the picture ready for Dec. 10, he then felt he had to change the title because he didn't think that coming out that far after Christmas that he could use *Reindeer Games*. We all liked the title.

**Q:** You decided to film the story in flashback though there was some debate over using this technique. Can you tell us why you chose to do that?

I thought maybe we shouldn't have it [the intro] because I thought it would tip the movie. I thought maybe we should just start out in prison. I cut the picture like that first and tested it. I thought, "Be honest with the audience. Show them at the beginning, that this is not going to be some cute little movie." I put it back and I think it works. It puts a spin on the whole movie.

**Q:** Was it a challenge to tell that type of story in this movie?

The main thing I had to do was really make sure of two things. One, I really had to tell the story honestly. I could never wink at the audience. It had to be really direct and everything had to be super realistic that this could happen. The real challenge in this picture is there was so much subtext in each scene that you have to get. There are so many other things going on with these characters.

**Q:** In *Ronin* as well as *Reindeer Games*, there seemed to be a lot of backstabbing going on. Are you attracted to more of the dark side of your characters?

I come from Hollywood. That's a way of life. I am kidding, and I am not. But, no it is not intentional. I think that it is a part of this kind of genre.

**Q:** Was it a struggle in telling this story to keep from revealing the plot twists too early?

Ehren Kruger wrote this script so well that I did not have to really worry about it. The script was really good. All I had to do was not try to get cute — not try to get too smart. I had to tell it

See FRANKENHEIMER on Page 4.

## The Ballet Theater de Bordeaux to perform "Romeo and Juliet"

BY JEFF WOLFSHOHL  
The Battalion

Though known for their famous declarations of love, "Romeo and Juliet" will not speak their immortal lines at the MSC Opera and Performing Arts Society's presentation of Shakespeare's classic play but instead demonstrate them through the art of ballet.

The full-length ballet "Romeo and Juliet" will be presented in three acts by the Ballet de L'Opera de Bordeaux with music by Sergei Prokofiev and choreography by Tilt Harm.

Jeremy Byrd, OPAS chair and a senior psychology major, said this ballet will be more easily accepted because of the subject's familiarity. "Romeo and Juliet" is a story more people

are familiar with, and most ballets are about stories that few people know," he said.

Dr. Paul Parrish, president of the board of directors for OPAS and a professor of English, said this is an important program for OPAS.

"This is different than the rest of the season for OPAS because it's a full-scale ballet," Parrish said. "This is another example of transformation of a story intended for the stage," he said.

The ballet is being presented differently than the typical Shakespeare play, but Byrd said it is still easy to follow.

"The storyline is the same," he said. "The only major difference is instead of vocals and speaking lines, it's all set to dance."

Even though there is alteration of the original version of "Romeo and Juliet," Byrd said Shake-

speare would have no problem approving of the interpretation.

"I would think he would appreciate it being told in different forms," he said.

Parrish said Shakespeare would be quite comfortable in seeing other artistic renditions.

"Shakespeare was very aware when he wrote the play that it likely would be performed differently than how he actually wrote it on the page," Parrish said.

Byrd said that students should try to take advantage of this opportunity to see a ballet.

"Students can experience an art form that has been around forever," Byrd said.

"The Ballet Theater de Bordeaux is one of the world renowned ballet groups," Parrish said. "This brings an assurance of quality."

The troupe was established in 1752 in France and was invited to entertain many dominant figures in history. The Emperor Luis Napoleon (Napoleon III) restored the Opera House to bring the company under his personal patronage.

Vladimir Skouratoff, a dancer of the Bolshoi Ballet, became ballet master for the company in 1970 and restored the company to its great France-Russo heritage created in the last century by previous ballet masters.

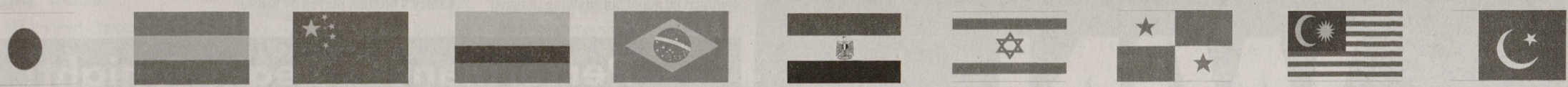
In 1990 the well-respected dancer Paolo Bortoluzzi was asked to become the artistic director of the company.

Bortoluzzi created many new works for the ballet, including "Formes," "The Four Seasons," and "The Beauty and the Beast," which have entered the company's active repertory.

**What: Romeo and Juliet**

**When: Friday and Saturday 7:30 p.m., Sunday 2 p.m.**

**Where: Rudder Auditorium**



## International Week 2000 Welcome the New Millennium!!!



### Opening Ceremony:

**MSC Flag Room: Monday, February 28, 2000 – 11:30 A.M.**  
Admission: Free

### Cultural Display:

**First Floor of the MSC**  
**Monday, February 28 2000 – 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.**  
**Tuesday, February 29, 2000 – 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.**  
Admission: Free

### International Buffet:

**Second Floor of the MSC: Wednesday, March 1, 2000**  
**7:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M.**  
Admission: \$8.00

### International Talent Show and Traditional Dress Parade:

**Rudder Auditorium: Friday, March 3, 2000 – 7:30 P.M. to 9:30 P.M.\***  
Admission: \$5.00

### International Party and Award Ceremony:

**MSC 201: Friday, March 3, 2000 - 10:00 P. M. to 1:00 A.M.\***  
Admission: Free

