

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

## "Highland Park" film shoots on location at Meadow Brook Hall

By **Dave Groves**, staff writer

Hollywood has once again joined the leagues of visitors who've found inspiration in the elegant rooms and manicured grounds of Meadow Brook Hall.

For three days last week, film crews converged on The Hall to capture scenes for feature-length comedy/drama named "Highland Park." The \$5 million film stars Danny Glover, Parker Posey and Billy Burke.

"If you happened by The Hall last Thursday or Friday, the parking lots, courtyard and front circle looked like a Hollywood studio set for a movie on the scale of Ben Hur," said Geoff Upward, The Hall's executive director.

"And, inside The Hall was no different with all the cables, equipment and technology they needed to recreate reality. The ballroom was made over to look like a men's club, complete with taxidermy carefully hung on the walls. I think Matilda and Alfred Wilson would have approved of the way it turned out."

"Highland Park" relates the story of a teacher, played by Glover, who wins the lottery and elects to use his money to reopen a shuttered library – in this case, the McGregor Library in Highland Park. The dining room, ballroom, grand staircase, gallery and the front entrance of Meadow Brook Hall were used to stage scenes at a men's club, boardroom and other city locations.

Upward said that while The Hall has a bustling schedule incorporating a variety of events, staff were happy to have film crews join the mix.

"The film crew began setting up in the ballroom on Wednesday morning and was out by 5 p.m., just as an exclusive-use corporate dinner party was arriving for an event on the first floor," Upward explained.

"We fit in wedding rehearsals on Thursday and Friday, working around the shooting. And, once the film crew left Friday night, our staff worked through the night to return The Hall to its pre-filming condition in time for Saturday's afternoon and evening weddings."

This is not the first time The Hall has been selected as an ideal location for filmmaking. Last summer, the film "Youth in Revolt" and the television series pilot "Prince of the Motor City" were shot on the grounds.

Upward said welcoming filmmakers helps The Hall in a number of ways. Among these are raising awareness of its educational role as a historic landmark, helping to acknowledge the incredible vision and philanthropy of OU's founders, and providing rental income that helps offset operating costs of nearly \$4,400 per day.

Meadow Brook Hall is the fourth largest historic house museum in the United States and is renowned for its superb craftsmanship, architectural detailing and grand scale. Built between 1926 and 1929 as the residence of Matilda Dodge Wilson (widow of auto pioneer John Dodge) and her second husband, lumber broker Alfred G. Wilson, the 110-room, 88,000-square-foot, Tudor-revival style mansion is complete with vast collections of original art and furnishings.

To learn more about tours and special events at The Hall, visit [meadowbrookhall.org](http://meadowbrookhall.org). Film producers and location scouts interested in learning more about shooting at The Hall should contact Shannon O'Berski by phone at (248) 364-6263 or via e-mail at [stobersk@oakland.edu](mailto:stobersk@oakland.edu).



A crew member prepares to shoot a scene for the film "Highland Park" in the ballroom of Meadow Brook Hall.



A film crew uses an intense lighting setup to create the appearance of daylight in the windows of the ballroom at The Hall.

### SUMMARY

For three days last week, film crews converged on Meadow Brook Hall to shoot "Highland Park," a \$5 million film that stars Danny Glover, Parker Posey and Billy Burke.

Created by Katherine Land - Deleted ([land@oakland.edu](mailto:land@oakland.edu)) on Wednesday, October 14, 2009

Modified by Katherine Land - Deleted ([land@oakland.edu](mailto:land@oakland.edu)) on Wednesday, October 14, 2009

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