

LOOMPANICS UNLIMITED PRESENTS

featured author **Dan Zamudio**

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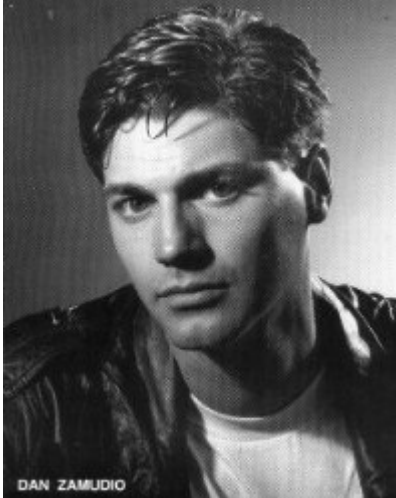
Dan Zamudio's earliest memories of sneaking into the movies have to do with an early version of his "Adopt a Family" approach which is detailed in his book, ***How to Sneak Into the Movies***. He would stand outside the Dunes Theater in Chicago and ask people to adopt him so that he could get in to see a rated **R** movie. This method worked great for getting him in to *Caddy Shack* and *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*, but failed for the *Blues Brothers*. He recalls how he pushed past the ticket taker and ran into the auditorium. Minutes later, ushers carried him outside while he repeatedly screamed, "I'm seventeen!" until they finally put him down. Perhaps an inauspicious beginning, but the idea was planted.

Dan wrote his book, ***How to Sneak into the Movies***, primarily to encourage those timid moviegoers who have always thought they could, but didn't quite have the courage to do it" themselves and didn't know anyone else who had. That should no longer stop you if you ever have aspired toward this activity. Whether your desire is to get into the movies, the symphony, the ballet, baseball games, museums, concerts or any other ticketed event, now you know someone who can show you the ropes.

Our author says this is a great way for today's disenfranchised youth to rebel against a society where the studios expect you to pay \$9.00 for an hour and a half of time to watch movies that are frequently not even worthy of your time let alone your money. Our man Dan, while not a disenfranchised youth, still feels this way. Plus, it's a great way to impress girls.

Yes, believe it or not, Dan relates that sneaking into the movies is a great way to go on a date and insert an element of excitement and "danger" into your excursion in a perfectly non-threatening way. Girls still live in a fairly protected environment. Some of them really enjoy the rush that comes with sneaking into the movies. Our expert says it can turn out to be a really good date. Just be sure to follow the rules of etiquette that the book, ***How to Sneak Into the Movies*** lays out or you could be considered a cheapskate.

Ladies, Would you sneak into the movies with this man?



In his high school years, Dan hooked up with other typical misfits, none of his particular peer group fitting in as your typical jocks or even as your typical nerds. They formed the "Family Cruisers" (named after the station wagon he and his friends would drive around in everyday). Dan says that if it wasn't for the "Family Cruisers", the art of sneaking into the movies would never have been perfected. It was during these formative "Family Cruiser" years that Dan began experimenting with the idea of sneaking into places as a group. He began searching for the place where all the guys could enjoy the benefits of a group sneak in. Finally, they decided on *Six Flags Great America*, an amusement park that was practically in their back yard; less than a 10-minute ride in the "Family Cruiser" and it contained three important elements:

1. The *Eagle* – at that time the worlds largest wooden roller coaster
2. *Q-Bert* – a video game they were hooked on and
3. *Chicks* – fine young women who might sit next to them on the Eagle.

Most of the time they used the "quick rub" method to get in. Dan would slide past the exit turnstile, walk around the carousel once to make sure nobody noticed, then walk to the exit and get his hand stamped before leaving. While the stamp was still wet he'd rub it on one of his friend's hands. They would then walk into the park for a fresh stamp and rush out to rub it on the next person, and so on. *Great America* was a good time, but Dan's true interest was always the movies.

After exploring different ways of sneaking in with his friends, he decided to fine tune the art by getting a job in his favorite "sneak in" theater. There he learned about alarm systems on doors, when the managers leave, which doors are the best to use, secret doors connecting mini-theaters to each other and most importantly, where the employees are stationed. From his unique vantage point, behind the scenes, he saw all the tricks that could be pulled. It was at this time that he decided to take the plunge himself and after a few early "catches" managed to successfully sneak into his first movie, and discovered the whole

experience to be very intoxicating. He tried it a few more times and found out it was more than just an accident that it had worked so well. He studied the secret routes and began coaching his friends on ways to sneak in.

Along the way he perfected the techniques he shares in his book – how to case a targeted theatre – to note the weak spots of the building, also how to distinguish the best times to sneak in and what traps to avoid. Dan recommends sneaking into the movies first as a means of building your courage and confidence before moving on to larger events. You'll learn how to create believable stories that no employee will be able to refute, what props to use, how to do multiple person sneaks, of course what to do if you're caught and perhaps more importantly, what *not* to do if you're caught.

He was becoming bolder and while no longer employed by movie theaters, now he was *in* the movies himself. His love of the big screen had prompted him to move to Los Angeles to pursue an acting career. His first apartment was just a couple blocks from the famous Chinese Theater. World famous not only for the footprints and movie premiers, but also as the first movie theater he sneaked into in California. He was appalled that it was so easy to get in. He had imagined security guards at every door. This *is* one of the number one tourist sites in the world. "I just asked to use the bathroom and they let me right in." says a disgruntled Dan.

He joined the Screen Actors Guild through Extra Work. Extra Work isn't glamorous but it did get him on to the sets nearly everyday and that was all he needed for awhile. Dan is the first one to admit he wasn't a great actor, but the casting directors loved him and kept trying to get him higher paying gigs. He worked for a while as a Bjoran on the "*Deep Space Nine*" Star Trek series and occasionally as a stand in for Luke Perry on the "*90210*" series. There were a few other memorable parts, but there is no room here to document them all for posterity.

It was during this time period, while attending acting class, that Dan began writing scenes and monologues and getting positive feed back about them from fellow actors. He began writing a short film about sneaking into the movies but it just wasn't coming out the way he wanted it to. On examination, he realized he seemed to be writing a long monologue and decided to develop the idea. Before he knew it, he had written a short book.

While driving home from an audition one day listening to the radio he heard the DJ's on KABC radio talking about the Oscars and jokingly say something about finding someone to sneak in. This was a "no brainer" so our man Dan pulled over to a pay phone and told the station he would do it. The next day he went to the studio and talked about it on the air. He was outfitted with a microphone bearing the KABC logo and given a tape recorder. The staff wished

him luck with a pleasant, "Don't get thrown in jail. Our bosses want nothing to do with this and won't bail you out."

It was the 1993 Academy Awards being held at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in downtown L.A. Dan scoped out the place the day before while they were having rehearsals. He stood by the back door and tried to talk to Jack Nicholson, but soon realized he had nothing he wanted to ask him. He noticed a door bolted open with huge cables and marked that as a possible entrance. The next day, Oscar day, he found the door still bolted open. He jumped over the cables and entered the building. It was crazy – people running all over the place setting things up. Within a few steps he realized he was on the stage behind the podium and froze, unsure of where to go. Suddenly, he remembered the best place to hide is in the bathroom. He walked to the front of the stage hoping to blend in with the crew, but a burly security guard saw him and screamed "No press in here!" Dan screamed back that he wasn't the press, but part of the crew, when, too late, he noticed the microphone he was holding and took off running. He did manage to evade the guard and made it into the auditorium. For 10 minutes or so he was rubbing elbows with the Hollywood glitterati in the audience, but spent the rest of the time in the press area *next* to the red carpet, without credentials, interviewing celebrities and having an even better time. It was a personal best for our author and a fabulous example of master sneak in technique – a stunning example for us all.

He and a date sneaked into the World Premier of the movie *Bill and Ted's Bogus Adventure* and sat next to Gene Simmons of *Kiss* and right behind Keanu Reeves. It was a great sneak and a very enjoyable date with an edge to it. That's when he began to really appreciate that there are women who love the rush of sneaking into events too.

Lately, Dan Zamudio has been a featured guest on *The Movie Show on Radio* which airs on over 75 talk radio stations across the US and Canada on Saturday evenings from 4 to 6 PM Eastern Time. Find a station near you and listen to Dan by checking the web site at www.movieshow.com. His book has also been mentioned in the *New Yorker* and *Entertainment Weekly* and in many an article about ***Loompanics Unlimited*** books.

Dan Zamudio is currently submitting a photo pictorial book to publishers entitled, what else, *I Sneak Into the Movies*, a children's book. While going to college to become a librarian (let this be a lesson to you if you ever make the mistake of thinking that librarians are stodgy, boring types) he has developed an interest in children's poetry.

According to our author, as long as the studios continue to consistently put out sub standard movies and bribe movie critics with free passes to hoodwink the rest of us into plunking down our cash to watch these bombs – he is going to continue to hone his skills – and so should you.