

Gilles Villeneuve Movie Press Conference - By Tony Martino - tifosi-club.com

A press conference announcing a movie based on great Gilles Villeneuve's life was held today at Jacques Villeneuve's Newtown restaurant in downtown Montreal. The movie, to be shot in English, French, and Italian, will be a human drama with a backdrop of Formula One racing. It will cover the life of Gilles Villeneuve, as seen through the eyes of his son Jacques Villeneuve. For many years, Jacques has always been reluctant to discuss about his father's life and other personal matters. Over the past few years, especially during his sabbatical year, he has learned to feel more at ease with the situation. Driving his father's old race-winning Ferrari F1, and wearing his old helmet, has helped him a lot. Gilles's special relationship with Enzo Ferrari will obviously be discussed as well.

([PRWEB](#)) February 27, 2005 -- A press conference announcing a movie based on great Gilles Villeneuve's life was held today at Jacques Villeneuve's Newtown restaurant in downtown Montreal. Present at the conference were: Jacques Villeneuve, Christian Duguay (director), Gabriella Martinelli (producer, President of Capri Films), Malcom Clarke (British scriptwriter), and Gerald Donaldson (author of a best-selling biography Villeneuve: The Life of the Legendary Driver)

The Newtown was filled with journalists, mainly from the Quebec media, and questions were asked for approximately 50 minutes, in both the French and English languages, as well as one question in Italian asked by an Italian Montreal-television journalist.

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Gabriella Martinelli's brother, a long time tifoso, had read the Gilles Villeneuve biography and then approached Gabriella telling her that he had something that would interest her. Indeed, it did. She found it so interesting and fascinating, that she just had to meet the author of the biography. She was fascinated by more than just the legend, which everyone knew about. More than anything else, she was fascinated by the man that Gilles was. He went from nothing to champion. He was above all, a husband, and a father. The fascination that Italians had for him, from their pure adoration to the flags half-mast when he died, simply astounded her.

Soon after, she met with Christian Duguay (The Art of War, 2000), whom in the past had turned down an offer to work on the movie Driven (2001). Duguay is the first to have mentioned that the movie was going to be Gilles Villeneuve's story as seen through the eyes of his son Jacques. Moreover, the story will be a human drama with a backdrop of Formula One racing. The main reason he refused to work on Driven, was due to a lacking in the story line to where there was not enough of the human side. This human and real aspect is what he wishes to bring to movie fans. It's not only about fast cars. It's about life as well. It's about passion, about father and son.

Jacques, Italy, Quebec, and Enzo

In order to successfully achieve the goal of having a movie that would show off a human side, it is necessary to tell the story as close to the reality as possible. With that in mind, Jacques Villeneuve was approached. It is a well-known fact that the Sauber driver has usually been extremely reticent to talk about his father in the past.

He has always been very closed and careful when discussing it. However, in the past few years, Jacques has slowly but surely started to become more and more open with the subject. He, himself, admitted that his sabbatical year was what helped him above all. Back in the days, when he started his career, most people did not see him, but his father, Gilles. Many actually called him Gilles. People did not want to see beyond his famous last name. For many years, he lived in the shadow of the legend that was his father. Slowly, people began seeing two Villeneuves, instead of one. Jacques's 1997 WDC helped greatly. During his sabbatical year, Jacques has had time to think to about many things. He drove his father old race-winning Ferrari F1, and even wore his old helmet. He is now at peace with himself.

As previously mentioned, the movie, to begin production in 2006, will be based on Jacques's point of view. Hence, he will be participating in the production of the movie, while the producer and director will nonetheless have carte blanche. But why now? Without any doubts, many have attempted to get Gilles's story out on the big screen. In the words of Jacques, the Capri Films proposal was serious from the start. They showed up with a clear idea, knowing exactly what they wanted to do and how.

Many important details cannot be ignored. Amongst others, the story must cover the beginning of Gilles's career race snowmobiles, all the way to his Formula One career. Hence, the movie will cover three decades: 60s, 70s, and 80s, and possibly all the way to his son's Championship. Also, or should we say obviously, the movie will talk about Gilles's very special personal relationship with Enzo Ferrari, whom loved Gilles as his own son like many Italians in Italy. The love Italians had for Villeneuve is almost inexplicable as even today, he is known as the incredible genius.

The Gilles Villeneuve phenomena reached people worldwide. It is important to note, though, that many do not know the about the political situation that was reigning in Quebec at the time when Gilles was the great driver that he was. The province was in the midst of a political crisis. Like it or not, this situation played a great role in Gilles's life and career. He managed to reach the top of the world while no one would have believed it! This will be represented in the film!

A budget of \$30M or more shot in three languages

As mentioned above, the movie will not be a racing movie. It will be a drama. Obviously, racing will play a very important role, but more of a background role. For this reason, Christian Duguay feels very comfortable working with an estimated \$30 million budget. Unlike Driven, there will not be any special effects scenes. Although, it is still not yet decided how the action scenes will be presented, if they will be recreated or if they will they use old footage? Throughout the movie, Duguay is looking forward to show moviegoers, as best as he possibly can, the manner and methods of driving a Formula One which has radically changed over the years. Furthermore, the production team will most probably have to discuss with Bernie Ecclestone regarding any rights issues. Perhaps Jacques can help, someone suggested.

Something very particular, yet becoming more and more common practice: the movie will be shot in three languages, namely English, French, and Italian. Why is that? This will help make the movie feel even more real and personal. Conversations that originally took place in French will be spoken in French, and the same goes for the Italian language.

No mentions were made about which actors, if any, were being sought to play the main roles in the movie. The only thing Duguay mentioned about the subject was that they were going to make the best use of local talent that they can find. Does this mean a local actor to play Gilles? We do not yet know.



Towards the end of the press conference, Jacques was talking about how he grew up watching his dad race with his "crazy style" and fearless approach. He grew up seeing that attitude, and stuck with it when he started racing. That is one thing he does not deny taking from his dad. He finished by saying "if [Gilles] would have been racing in the 90s, he would most probably have still been with us today. If I had been racing back then, I might not have been here today!"

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