BY SHELLEY MOORE

She's Gotta Have It

INTRODUCING FILMMAKER

SPIKE LEE

"BROTHERS LIKE TO BRAG ABOUT ALL THE DIFFERENT WOMEN THEY HAVE. SOMETIMES WE FORGET THAT A LOT OF SISTERS ARE DOING THE EXACT SAME THING WITH US"

Junior's, a large burger and cheesecake emporium in downtown Brooklyn, USA, has been a popular gathering place for decades. Why, just this morning, Congressman Ed Towns ate breakfast here. So did movie mogul Spike Lee.

Movie mogul? Wait a minute. Spike Lee is just a guy from the neighborhood. An average cat in blue jeans. Looks about 19 years old. But underneath the everyday exterior is a young man whose first feature film recently held its world premiere in Manhattan to widespread critical acclaim. We're talking about a film that grossed $650,000 in its first three weeks of release. We're talking about a film that landed Spike Lee a three-picture deal with Island Pictures, which is already financing his second film to the tune of $3 to $4 million.

But for now, the long lines outside the movie houses are for film number one. **She's Gotta Have It** is the story of Nola Darling, an attractive young artist who can't seem to find everything she needs in just one man. So she'll take three, thank you, and those three spend the better part of the film in a hilarious state of competition and mutual contempt. Jamie Overstreet is the type of man every woman **thinks** she wants — kind, respectful and true. Trouble is, the Jamies of the world can be so possessive and so... **plain.** Then there's Mars Blackmon, a toothpick planted in 40-pound sneakers. He's funny and cute but desperately hooked on his fading adolescence. Greer Childs is pretty and polished, but his heart belongs to his mirror.

Nola keeps all three men dangling from her string, just as coolly as Spike Lee keeps movie audiences dangling from his. By November, **She's Gotta Have It** will have people in stitches in close to 50 cities around the country. In January, the film moves on to Europe, Japan and Australia.

As if he didn't have enough to do, Spike made his acting debut in the film as the comical Mars Blackmon. "Halfway through writing the script, I decided to play the part myself. Mars and I have a little bit in common. We have a similar sense of humor, and we both like to agitate."

Spike the Agitator expected to hear some flack from women about Nola Darling's character, "since some people might feel she's being portrayed as a 'loose woman'." Instead, women have cheered loudest and longest for the film, for here's an independent woman who's calling the shots in her relationships.

Male audiences are amused, too. "It's brutally honest," said one man. "Brothers like to brag about all the different women they have. Sometimes we forget that a lot of sisters are doing the exact same thing with us."

Surprisingly, few men seem to be offended by the way the film ridicules its male characters. "This is not **The Color Purple,** where all the men were the same," Spike explains. So far, about half of the audiences for **She's Gotta Have It** have been white. Spike makes it very clear, however, that he makes films for black people.

"Black people are starving for some real images of themselves."

Artistic gratification is as important to Spike's work as commercial success. **She's Gotta Have It** was shot in "artsy" black-and-white by Spike's classmate and friend Ernest Dickerson, who has been earning a strong reputation of his own in recent years as a cinematographer. The film was further refined by a mellow jazz score, written by Spike's father, and a series of still outdoor shots, photographed by his brother.

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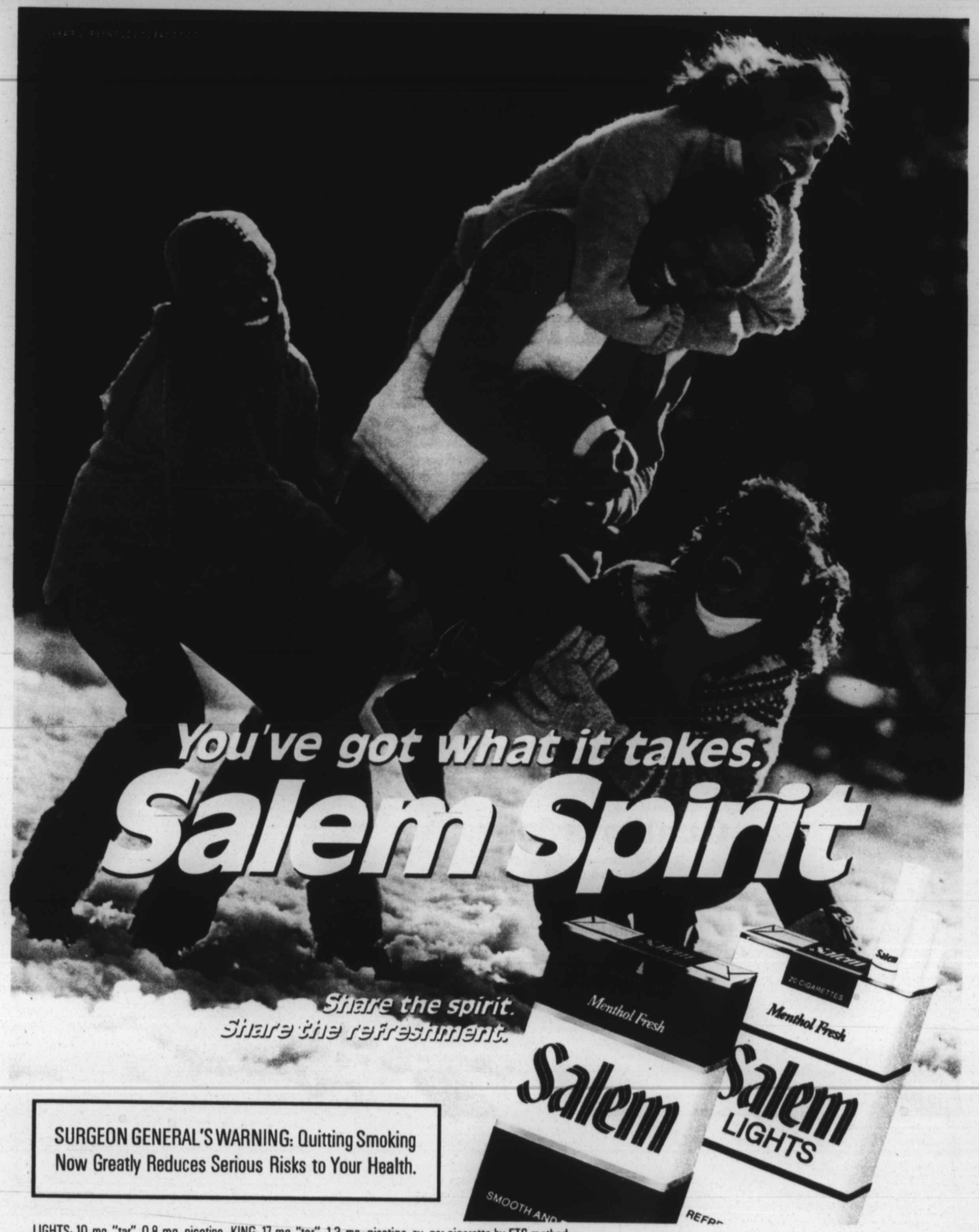
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