

Will the real Nicole Oliver please stand up . . .

Movie biz

By Glen Schaefer
Movie Reporter

Kenneth Branagh plays a journalist who visits movie sets to interview celebrities. He's a whining grasper who just wants to be famous himself.

You'll forgive me if the subject matter of Woody Allen's new movie hits a little close to home. But the déjà vu really started piling up when the Branagh character interviewed a sultry actress named Nicole Oliver (played by Melanie Griffith).

See, about a year ago, I went to a movie set and interviewed a sultry actress named



Griffith (left) and the real Nicole Oliver.

Nicole Oliver. Herewith, pictures of the real and fictional Olivers.

The real Oliver is a Canadian who splits

her time between jobs in Toronto and Vancouver. Lately, she's done guest roles on the Toronto-shot TV shows Traders and Total Recall, between stints of travelling the festival circuit with the Vancouver-shot thriller The Falling.

She got a kick out of seeing her name in a Woody Allen movie, even if she wasn't in it.

"Somebody who saw Celebrity mentioned it to my agent," Oliver says over the phone from Toronto. "I hear the character in the Woody Allen movie isn't like me, she's not nice at all."

Oliver plans to check out Celebrity for herself when it opens tonight.

■ An article in a recent issue of the U.S.

trade magazine Variety says Los Angeles is losing out as TV and film production moves north.

Apparently, location shooting in L.A. was down 25.7 per cent in September from the same month last year. October shooting was down 18.1 per cent compared to October 1997.

L.A. is still far and away the biggest North American production centre but a cheap Canadian dollar and Canadian tax breaks have pushed U.S. producers to Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto, where entertainment industry spending is up 40 per cent in the last three years.

Another article in the same issue says New York production is at near-peak levels.