Jacques Méthe's
La dernière y restera

The film opens on the solitary figure of a young girl, alone and surrounded by an open field. The sun is setting, casting long shadows. She is standing at the edge of a small stone wall, separated from the world by a thin barrier. Her face is etched with a sense of longing, as if she is yearning for something beyond her reach. The camera lingers on her face, capturing every nuance of her expression, from the slight curl of her lip to the glint in her eye. It is as if the girl is a puzzle, waiting to be solved, and the viewer is drawn into her world, seeking answers to the mysteries that surround her.

But on seeing the film the first thought was that perhaps he hasn't really gone off on such an adventure after all. What has he given us? A movie that is well made, but which reads like a catalogue of every tried and true cliche in the comedy handbook. I gather that was his intention, because we've seen everything in it before - many times: a winning ticket slipping out of the winner's hands and blowing away with the wind; the mad chase past the traffic cop; through the nudist camp with hands hastily in place, sneaking from tree to skinny tree with the appropriate background music in an attempt to retrieve the errant fortune which has landed on a muscle-man's sleeping girlfriend; and finally, so close to satisfaction on the railway tracks, only to have a shoelace get snagged as he reaches for it with you-know-what chugging around the bend...

The ending? You've seen that too. Nevertheless, Holeris knows how to put these scenes together. Waynet's relentlessly high energy level, that of a little kid who is about to wet his pants, gets on your nerves. But with the help of Holeris's framing he gets the job done; his expressions and movements pay apt homage to Dagwood comic strips and are quite funny.

The story of a lottery ticket has universal appeal. Especially in Ontario. Could that be why the Ontario Arts Council gave some of its precious purposeful money in aid of the film? It's difficult to explain some things. Perhaps they were investing in Holeris's future. If he can continue to produce movies as competent but cis unoriginal as this one, maybe he'll soon be doing things for a million in the film business.

And if that comes to pass, again we'll have to say, more power to him.

John Brooke

Nick Holeris/Jim Theodolir's Anything for a million

Anything for a Million is a 14-minute comedy directed by Nick Holeris of Toronto. This interesting piece of work deals with a winning lottery ticket and the fate of the lucky, unlucky kibitz, played with manic enthusiasm by Waynet Vetli, who possesses it. But although it is an interesting piece of work, it is not really a very interesting movie.

For this reviewer the most fascinating thing about Anything for a Million is that it got made. For many filmmakers, it seems to be such a project So it was inspiring to us much more.

But the story of a lottery ticket has universal appeal. Especially in Ontario. Could that be why the Ontario Arts Council gave some of its precious purposeful money in aid of the film? It's difficult to explain some things. Perhaps they were investing in Holeris's future. If he can continue to produce movies as competent but cis unoriginal as this one, maybe he'll soon be doing things for a million in the film business.

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