

A new generation poised for action

by **Connie Tadros**

In the shifting fortunes of the recent Canadian filmmaking past, those individuals known as independent filmmakers have continued their uphill climb with little notice from the press, each other or the rest of the industry at large. These are the unaffiliated graduates from arts council grants who stand outside the structures of production companies. Among them are some of the most promising talents now at work.

Last fall, there was a flurry of recognition. Janice Cole and Holly Dale saw their feature-length documentary *P4W* go from festival acclaim to exhibition at Cineplex in Toronto. Sturla Gunnarson's *After the Axe* got unprecedented promotion from the National Film Board for its CBC screening. Ron Mann gathered kudos from Canadian festivals and followed up this spring at Filmex with *Imagine the Sound*. *Clown White*, produced by Martin Harbury, ran on both French and English CBC networks, proving that superb dubbing can make films accessible to both linguistic groups. Earlier in the year, Clay Borris had taken *Alligator Shoes* to the Directors Fortnight in Cannes and received high praise. Angelo Stea had finished *Exposure* with no help from any arts council, and convinced the CBC to broadcast it. Larry Moore had completed his third short film.

Yet these filmmakers would never think of themselves as a group. In fact, they share little more than their passion for making films.

These are the filmmakers who chose not to get on that big bandwagon called the feature boom. No doubt, they could have found a spot crewing a multi-million dollar film, 'learning their craft' and getting well paid. But they were not concerned with this 'mainstream' filmmaking.

This is not to say that these filmmakers, and others like them, are dilettantes, working uniquely with film as an art-form, or experimenting with personal visions per se. All of them hope to reach an audience—in fact, aim to reach that audience. They are streetwise in a way filmmakers ten years ago were not, aware that money everywhere is scarce and that they must justify the help that they get by generating financial returns on their films.

In April, Cinema Canada invited a dozen filmmakers to a 'state-of-the-nation' discussion. It seemed strange that these individuals were so silent, that what had seemed to be the start of something in the fall had withered away. Moreover, their voices were absent in all the discussions which

were going on at the federal level about film policy. Rugged individuals all, preferring to get on with their affairs rather than spend time in a lobbying effort, they came together for three hours to talk about their work, their difficulties, and the government agencies which create the context within which they make films. The group was kept small to facilitate discussion, but for every filmmaker present, several like him were at work on similar projects, having similar successes. The initial invitation was extended to those under thirty, but several older filmmakers came too.

Unexpectedly, that discussion acted to heighten their consciousness, making them aware of the stakes involved in the policy talks which the Minister of Communications was holding with the Producers Council of Canada and in the work of the various task-force committees. They continued to meet together for several weeks after the Cinema Canada round table, writing down policy positions which they felt would further their work as independents. These are also published below.

The group, now the Ad Hoc Committee of Canadian Film-Makers, hopes that others working independently across the country may find elements in the brief which strike a responsive chord, and that letters of support for the brief will be sent to Francis Fox, the Minister of Communications, in Ottawa.

At the outset, the "group" seemed exceedingly low key and a bit embarrassed. "I have to lot to say, but I won't name names or give figures when the tape's on," said one, sotto voce, as we gathered around the table. "I'll see you once it's over to tell you what I really think," said another. It wasn't going to be easy.

In fact, it wasn't much of a "group"; none present knew all the others, despite the fact of their recent successes. It became clear as the evening wore on that these filmmakers were isolated from each other and felt disconnected. They perceived their colleagues as competitors for funding, and were used to playing their cards close to their chest. Yet they shared the same concerns and aspirations.

Investing in the future

These filmmakers are the product of a substantial investment, made in large part by the government agencies. With few exceptions they got their start with arts councils' grants: either from the Canada Council or from the Ontario Council.

They understand the intentions behind those grants; their films are innovative,

contribute to film culture and broach subjects of importance. Because many of them are also film school graduates they have been able to make professional use of those first grants, in many cases turning out films which have been commercially screened in theatres or on television.

The consensus was that the councils have fulfilled their role admirably. Though there were differences of opinion about specific projects, as there always must be, it was clear that the filmmakers found a sympathetic ear at the arts councils. Even more, they appreciated having been judged by their peers and felt that the jury system corresponded to their needs. To the one filmmaker who begged to differ and complained that his projects had been turned down, the response was, "call the Council. Ask to be put on a jury. Then you'll understand how the system works." It was this ease of communication with the councils which was remarkable. It was an ease, unfortunately, which they were not to find in any other government agency.

Interestingly, the two filmmakers who had had no luck with the arts council had both made films which were bought and screened by the CBC. One had got important production assistance from the National Film Board.

So it seemed that, depending upon the degree to which a project met arts councils' criteria on the one hand, or was deemed to be commercially interesting by the networks on the other, that first films by persistent and promising filmmakers can indeed get off the ground.

What's the cost to the filmmaker?

Putting the money together to make their films was not easy, and there is nothing complacent about their approach. In every case, getting the film together took its toll. "The resources are all there, and we know most of them, but it takes a long time to get a film made because of the way you have to go about it," said one.

Indeed, the time spent writing for grants, visiting the networks about pre-sales, talking to the NFB with hopes of getting some completion help eats away from the time which they can devote to filmmaking. The process of getting a project before the cameras was viewed as arduous, debilitating and unpleasant.

Nevertheless, it is the same process which has made them streetwise, attuned to the various requirements of the different agencies, and adept at dealing with some levels of bureaucracy. Because they are affiliated with no established producers, they have had to produce for themselves, and have learned in the process the many lessons which one must live through to understand.

To a person, they felt they had paid their dues. And they were proud of having done so. The suffering seemed part of the initiation process and only the committed made it through. "There are all these people who come out of nowhere and want to make movies... They go out there and can't get money, then they go home and do something else. That's where they belonged in the first place. But the people that really want to make films, really believe, stick around and end up doing their films."

The children of the boom

Curiously, these filmmakers think of themselves as commercial filmmakers—not in the ugly sense the word has taken on today, but in the finest sense. They wish to reach a public with films of value, and care very much about seeing their films turn a profit. "So much money was spent and so much money was wasted that everybody is paying a lot of attention to it. People are taking a much closer look at what kind of project you're dealing with, where it's going, what the market is and whether or not it

"The people that are making it in the country are subsidiaries of multinational corporations. It's a larger political problem we're talking about."

is going to make the money back. People can't waste money anymore."

"Art" and "culture" are not defenses which these filmmakers use. Indeed, it may be time to bury the stereotype of the young, self-indulgent filmmaker, interested only in his private vision.

This is not to say that they are universally wise in the ways of marketing; some still make films with no thought of distribution until the film is finished. But this is now the exception, not the rule and, as one filmmaker responded, "You can only get away with that for so long... soon you have to start thinking ahead."

These are the children of the boom, and they have bought many of the arguments put forward by more senior producers. They speak the same language, talking of target audiences, distribution advances (which are rare for their films)

"What people are making films about has got a lot to do with how they're getting funded."

and the like. Moreover, they do not seriously question the system as it stands: "we have no real quarrel with the big budget 'international-style' productions that have characterized the industry during recent years," they say. These are not rebels who want to do away with things as they are today; they are simply the next generation, looking for a way into the system.

The equation doesn't work

From their point of view, they have earned the right to be accepted. With several films to their credit and a proven ability to see their projects through, they have received critical acclaim and show commercial promise. Why, then, does everything come to a standstill once they leave the councils?

Over and over that evening they came back to discussing policy. What is the government's policy? What are the criteria? What do we have to do (which we haven't already done) to win approval?

Admittedly, the group as it came together was singularly apolitical. Those present knew little about the history and politics of the Canadian industry or about the imminence of a film policy, and were more interested in spending time on their films than on lobbying.

Bewilderment rather than rage was the emotion which seemed to predominate. "It's not that we've become complacent at all. I think we're all as politically minded as people like Robin Spry were... It's just that it has become too desperate and all our time is consumed with our own projects," commented one. "There is a huge problem, but I think that everybody in this room has found ways of working around it or with it," said another. "We've become isolated. We don't connect anymore," concluded a third.

The pressure coming from a system which doesn't work for the young filmmakers is creating problems. On the one hand, they are greeted by the CFDC with indifference and made to feel their projects are no good. On the other hand, they see mediocre big-budget productions being made, and wonder on what basis decisions are made. Lastly, they see their colleagues getting rich crewing those productions and wonder if it is worth it, standing aside to wait for their own chance. Allegiances are mixed.

"We have to take our own responsibility for the industry we're in..." said one who had been to Hollywood and answered for the Canadian industry while there. "We don't have to take responsibility," said another. "We have to build from what they may have destroyed."

It was all a bit confusing, almost schizophrenic, to hear the young filmmakers talk about their position within the Canadian industry. Some felt a part of what was going on, several opposed it. One maintained that an independent filmmaker was one who was "generating ideas that are oriented somewhere towards society as opposed to ideas that



● Howard Hutton, Tibor Takacs, Sturla Gunnarson, Steven Zoller, Clay Borris and Ron Mann grouped around the table (l. tor.) while Steve Fanfara, Larry Moore and John Phillips stand on guard.

are oriented directly towards the market place," but the others didn't back him up. As he continued to say that "people get together because they've got something they want to say," and raised the question "what are we doing here? What do we want to say?" he was in the minority. The group felt more comfortable dealing with form than content, and continued to talk about the structure of things.

Ultimately, their common interest was expressed thus: "The basis [of any continuing meetings] would be with one sole objective; to get a government policy that actively, in some co-ordinated way, encouraged and fostered a Canadian-based industry." There was a strong feeling - though one many had tried to shut out - that being a filmmaker in Canada today meant necessarily getting involved in the politics. That pressure must be brought to bear to find an equation which would work.

Elements of solution

There was an awareness that the policies in place were not drawn up by filmmakers, and that some degree of consultation - or, better yet, direct administration - by filmmakers would be the only solution. Like those on the Producers Council, they want in on the decisions.

They also would like to do away with the piece-meal approach to policy. "It's next to impossible to find out what the policies are, and to have any certainty of long term continuity," judged one. "There should be a clear system which announces the prerequisites and, if you meet those prerequisites, you should be eligible for funding," followed another.

The agencies - the CFDC, NFB and CBC - came in for criticisms which are now familiar, and these are clearly outlined in the brief. One new element proposed is the desire of the filmmakers to create a "through-line" philosophy so that promising debutants are not stopped at the doors of the CFDC; proven success at the council level should lead to a

welcome reception there, they believe. Naturally, they wish the CFDC had more money to meet the many demands on its resources.

In all, the suggestions are conservative, and show a willingness to work within the general outlines of the government structures as they are today.

Hidden messages

The filmmakers that first night, strangers to each other and unused to voicing their concerns in public, seemed fearful of getting angry. In fact, they were leery of each other and of becoming involved in a process which would draw attention to them. They did, however, set a date for a next meeting. As the group gathered the following week, one who had participated fully during the first session rushed in upset, told the others that people in the Department of Communications in Ottawa had wind of a group of "shit-disturbers" who were going to raise hell in Toronto, and that he couldn't afford to be associated with any such group. Exit.

It was a shock. A shock, first of all, because proceeding with discussions seemed a dangerous endeavor, and certainly none of those gathered perceived themselves as "shit-disturbers". But then the reality - the possibility of affecting change - sank in. If the government was upset over the innocuous meeting which had been held, perhaps they would be listened to.

The group recouped the errant member, and followed through with meetings on several levels which resulted in the following brief.

A few weeks ago, Cinema Canada asked the group to sit for a cover photo. Again, several who had been present at the meetings preferred to be absent, sceptical about whether or not the public exposure would be to their advantage. Much to the surprise of the magazine, the filmmakers chose to pose as the Fathers of the Confederation!

Clearly, a process had begun. A certain

"If you're not straddling two potential markets, your film is going to bite it badly financially."

degree of alienation (from each other and from the problems which confronted them) had been overcome, and a common effort led them to take a stand. It is a modest but, perhaps, important first step.

The context

Since the demise of the Toronto Co-op and the Council of Canadian Filmmakers, the young Toronto film community has lacked a centre. The Funnel has valiantly carried the flame of the experimental filmmaker, and L.I.F.T. has begun to gather those together who want to work co-operatively. But those who now call themselves the Ad-Hoc Committee fall into neither category.

There is a grave problem throughout the country. Since the CFDC took its "commercial" turn during the McCabe period, the young filmmakers feel themselves to be less and less welcome. They share horror stories about the script evaluations given them by the corporation (along with the refusals to participate) and wonder what will become of their talent. They know they have stories to tell, they believe they will succeed in the marketplace, and they have little respect for the bureaucrats who tell them otherwise. They know that their non-commercial films have reached the public which many a CFDC film has failed to attract, and marvel that the evidence they present is not conclusive.

What they fail to appreciate is that they are part of the problem. Until now, they have allowed themselves to remain invisible. They do not constitute a "group" in the minds of those who make policy decisions, and so are barely considered in the equations being considered. When the Minister says, "the filmmakers tell me this and so," he is not referring to this new generation but to the old guard which has been lobbying for many a year and has gotten good at it.

It is time for the wheel to begin to squeak, for the new generation to demand attention, and action. And it can't be a half-hearted gesture, a single letter to the Minister. It must be constant, and confident, and must grow to a clamour.

The Americanization of our industry is well on its way. For the government, fostering this movement represents the road of least resistance and, currently, it could point to recent financial returns to justify the movement. This may be a depressing fact for many who care about a Canadian industry, but it is a fact all the same and must be recognized.

The filmmakers, during that first encounter, were ambivalent about this question of content. They weren't ready to talk about what they wanted to say in their films, but only about the fact that they wanted to make them. Yet they cast themselves as the Fathers of Confederation. Let's hope that was a statement, and that more will be forthcoming to stem the tide which is currently carrying our industry directly to American shores.

Photo: Patti Meade

A brief from the Ad Hoc Committee of Canadian Independent Filmmakers

The following brief was prepared by the Ad Hoc Committee of Canadian Independent Film-Makers, and was presented to the Minister of Communications, Francis Fox, on June 14, 1982. The Committee is looking for support for its brief, and hopes that other groups and individuals will endorse it and send acknowledgement of such endorsement to the Minister.

Over the past 15 years the federal government of Canada, through its various policies and agencies, has shown that the development of a film industry, with both its artistic and industrial facets, is imperative to the cultural integrity of a nation. While the Government's policies have been instrumental in creating an industry from where none existed before, and have given rise to this country's first truly indigenous generation of film-makers, there lies at this juncture great uncertainty as to the future of the Canadian film industry. As the Government is currently holding film policy discussions, we feel that the moment has arrived for the Government to be able to combine both its industrial and cultural policies within the film industry.

Our committee is comprised of independent film-makers involved in a wide spectrum of indigenous productions, under key positions as either director or producer. Our respective films have represented Canada in a number of major international festivals, and have been honoured with significant awards; been telecast both nationally and internationally in both official languages; been sold to U.S. network and Pay-TV systems; and many have returned respectable profits for their investors.

We formed out of meetings held on an ad hoc basis to discuss individual concerns. It was quickly perceived that, as a group, we had all experienced similar frustrations and held similar concerns about the film industry as it exists today. We wish these concerns to be represented in the current government policy discussions. Simply put, the main problem identified by our committee is that the Canadian film industry has stopped developing.

We have no real quarrel with the big budget "international-style" productions that have characterized the industry during recent years. These films have helped develop much-needed production skills, and have created employment. However, these films have undeniably little or nothing to do with the Canadian experience. More importantly, while these films were being made, a whole generation of film-makers who proved their ability to make professional, culturally important films through the help of the film schools, the Canada Council and other arts councils, the National Film Board, the Canadian Broadcasting Corp., and on their own initiative, have been effectively dead-ended. It is ironic that the system that developed this pool of talent is simultaneously acting as a dam, preventing these individuals from continuing their careers.

We feel that the following concrete suggestions, based on our experience and research, directly address the serious problems facing the Canadian film industry. The central thrust to our proposal is the establishment of a

"through-line" philosophy by the government when it comes to supporting the development of a producer or director. We therefore start our brief with the Canada Council, the government body most likely to play a part in the formative years of a film-maker's career.

The Canada Council

The Canada Council frequently offers a young film-maker with little experience their first step toward a professional career. Everyone agrees that the Council fulfills this sort of limited role, as well as its cultural mandate, admirably. However, to improve the Council's effectiveness we suggest it be clearly identified as merely a stepping-stone to young film-makers, not as a perpetual wheel of assistance. In our opinion, the latter serves only to inhibit a film-maker's own development, and reduces the funds available for newer, more deserving talent.

It is therefore very important that as new talents become eligible for Canada Council support, those previously assisted by the organization have further avenues of support essential to their growth as film-makers.

Canadian Film Development Corporation

The Canadian Film Development Corporation, as the name suggests, should play the most significant governmental role in the advancement of the Canadian film industry. It simply has not. The Corporation has allowed a void to exist for film-makers whose projects are beyond the Canada Council's mandate but who are not considered established film producers.

In keeping with the "through-line" principle, the CFDC should, on a continuous basis, be weaning those it has helped reach a point of independence and commercial viability. As these producers no longer require access to CFDC funds, the freed monies can be applied to new film-makers, thereby assuring the future of the Canadian film industry, and its vitality.

Currently, the CFDC is not living up to this mandate. It has not "graduated" an appreciable number of producers onto independence. As a result, it has been unable to foster new talent and integrate them into the system. Consequently, the CFDC, in our judgement, is in need of radical restructuring.

Our recommendations are as follows:

Firstly, That the CFDC publicly state its position in the following areas: its budget allocation by project type (i.e. feature film, documentaries, television films etc.) and the qualifying requirements for access to funds. And that it should be held accountable to these commitments.

Secondly, The CFDC's current budget is evidently inadequate to their needs vis-a-vis their stated policies, resulting in their inability to meet their commitments. This has led to the present confusion concerning the Corporation within the industry. Therefore, the annual budget should be substantially increased. This increase should be allocated strictly to development and production, and not to an expanded overhead or administration.

Thirdly, That a board be established

to determine the allocation of all funds in accordance with the CFDC's stated policies. This board would ensure that projects are chosen with consistency and with accountability to the film-making and cultural communities of Canada. The board should be rotated annually, and be comprised of individuals who have distinguished themselves in the following areas: Distribution—one member; Group A & B—a director and a producer (see below, from different groups); Screenwriting—one member; National culture—one prominent individual in a field other than film. The board members would be chosen by the national director of the CFDC, and accepted upon ratification by the departing board.

Lastly, We propose that the Corporation's eligibility requirements be broken into two categories—

Group A: Well established commercial producers and directors. Involvement with this group would include development and interim financing only, and should be structured so that individuals be eventually weaned away from the CFDC altogether.

Group B: Producers and directors who have proven themselves with films of some success and critical approval, and who have shown potential for making commercially viable films. This category should be structured so that producers and directors eventually become eligible for Group A. The CFDC should devote not less than 50% of its overall budget to Group B, and these monies would be available for development, interim and equity financing.

Note: In the event that no additional funds are available for the Corporation at this time, we propose that its entire budget be used solely for the development of projects, with the monies being allocated as proposed above.

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

To return to our concept of a "through-line" being integral to maintaining the health of an indigenous film industry, we feel that the CBC has the means and the methods to do precisely that.

Unfortunately, only about 3% of the CBC's current budget is being spent on acquisitions from the private sector. This figure is unacceptable. We are aware of steps being taken to improve the situation, such as the creation of the Independent Acquisitions Department, but the fundamental issue is that a much, much larger percentage of the CBC's budget needs to be allocated for acquisitions from the private sector.

We would like to see the Independent Acquisitions Department be given a mandate to participate in development, pre-sale and equity ventures. And they should be encouraged to co-operate as fully as possible with other government agencies, particularly the CFDC. We also feel that purchase prices and pre-sale prices per unit should be substantially increased to be more in line with industry standards.

We would also like to see the CBC instigate an on-going programme to train and utilize new directors for its in-house productions. In addition, the producers at the CBC should consider using more freelance crews and technicians.

National Film Board

All of us believe it's important for the NFB to continue making films of social, artistic and political relevance. Our problem with the NFB stems from the fact that its cost-effectiveness is scandalously low. We recommend that the NFB's head office be immediately reorganized on the lines of its more efficient regional studios where staff producers employ freelance directors and crews on a per film basis.

The current trend toward co-productions, we endorse fully. It should be continued and expanded.

In the past, the NFB distribution system has been known to make film sales well below the market value, thus undercutting the private sector in an increasingly limited market. This should not be permitted to continue.

Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission

While the CRTC does not play a direct role in determining an individual's career, it is very instrumental in the evolution of the Canadian film industry as a whole. The past failures of the Commission—specifically, its unwillingness to enforce its own Canadian content guidelines—has been a contributing factor to the weakness shown by the industry at this time. It is essential that the CRTC be empowered to revoke licences or levy fines equal to the cost of producing the number of hours of short-fall licences have failed to live up to. The Commission should also be prepared to implement that power.

Capital Cost Allowance

The Capital Cost Allowance can be a particularly effective tool in revitalizing the industry. It should be increased to a minimum of 150% on a sliding scale:

Full Canadian productions

(10 pts.) — 150%

Not less than 6 pts. —

a minimum of 100%.

The sliding scale will dramatically increase a Canadian producer's ability to produce his films.

Distribution

We understand that distribution does not directly fall under any government agency, but we feel there is pressing need for legislation in this area. Without Canadian-owned distribution the film industry in this country cannot control its own future. Legislation should be immediately enacted to ensure that all films exhibited in Canada be distributed by Canadian-owned companies. This would guarantee that large sums of the Canadian movie-going public's money would remain within this country, within the industry, and available for further Canadian production.

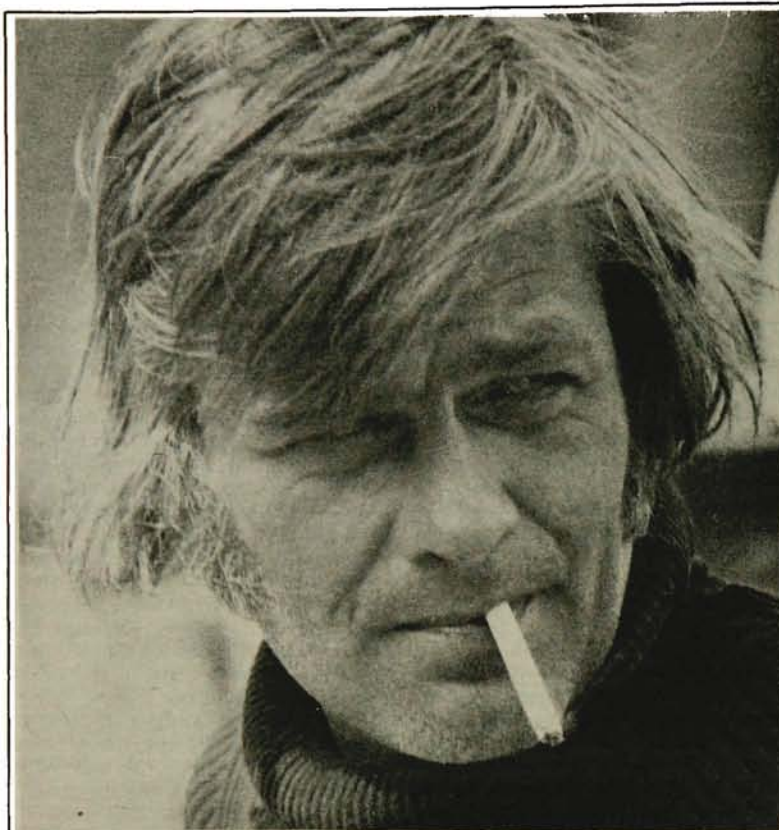
Conclusion

This brief has outlined what our group of individual film-makers sees as the problems facing the Canadian film industry. The instruments to affect change in these areas are in the government's hands. We strongly urge the government to proceed immediately before it is too late, before there is no Canadian film industry to speak of.

We thank you for giving us the opportunity to communicate with you.

Peter Carter

1933-1982



What follows is a special tribute to Peter Carter prepared by his many friends. It is fitting I should be asked to write this introduction in my role as President of the Directors Guild of Canada, an organization Peter long supported and whose policies he from time to time shaped.

Peter and I worked together many times on television projects or shared committee duties for the Guild. His other friends will detail his personal graces and attest to his many talents. For my part and on behalf of his Guild I would like to say if you would know what we mean when we try to communicate to others what is contained in the complex accolade "Filmmaker", what we mean is Peter Carter.

Lew Lehman ●

It was with shock and consternation that his friends greeted the news of Peter Carter's death in June. He passed away in Los Angeles, having suffered a massive heart attack. Below, many of them remember "P.C.". The Directors Guild of Canada has established a trust fund in his memory, and those who wish to honor Carter are urged to contact the Guild.

Seventy-eight episodes in two years in the can and then on to the *Seaway*.

Only the most dedicated crew and talent could have survived. Thirty grueling one-hour productions, humping on ships tossed about from the Lakehead to the Saguenay. Who can ever forget P.C. overcoming a dock strike in Montreal on our first production, or freezing this butt off holding production together in fog, sleet, snow and bauxite, always nursing along everyone and everything from bruised egos and hangovers to panic in the St. Lawrence. Once again I was most fortunate to be supported by the very best talent and production skills ever brought together on a series—but knowing Peter was "on board" just made it seem easier and the massive production load lighter. He truly was a "mate" in the most positive way, and the list of producers, directors, camera, crew and artists whose careers were advanced by his knowledge and assistance reads like the "Who's Who of the Canadian Film Industry."

Although in later years our careers went down separate paths, there was

never a time I couldn't call on him for advice or help. He was a loyal friend, always there, generous to a fault with his time and support. He always said "You can do it LUV."

I overheard someone ask after he died, "What did he accomplish?" For those of us who worked with him, he left a legacy of professionalism and dedication to the film industry second to none. His ability to solve problems was not just confined to film production—he solved some major ones in his personal life as well. Because his films came in on time and on budget, his creativity was not always challenged or appreciated, but a retrospective of his prodigious work will most assuredly convince the most cynical about his enormous talent. It was snuffed out too soon.

Peter Carter loved life and people and left something special to everyone whose life he touched. He was an original whose mold may not be cast again.

We'll miss you, P.C. You were a LUV!

Maxine Samuels ●

Donald Carter, Peter Carter's father, moved to Canada in 1954 with his family to become head of production at Crawley Films Limited.

At the age of 29 Peter joined the production staff at Crawley's and for a three-year period worked on many documentary productions for such diverse sponsors as Seagrams, Molsons, McGraw Hill, Province of Saskatchewan, Imperial Oil, etc.

Peter came by his bent for film honestly, since Donald Carter had for years played a senior production role with the Rank Organization under John Davis.

In 1957-58 our 39 film series *R.C.M.P.* was going at full speed, and Carter showed his worth on the *R.C.M.P.* set as probably the best assistant director I have ever known.

The *R.C.M.P.* joint venture—Crawley/CBC/BBC—resulted in 39 half-hour documentaries (based upon *R.C.M.P.* files) which received wide distribution not only in England and Canada, but in the U.S.A. (NBC) and in Europe.

Peter teamed with special effects expert Eddie Fowlie (*Bridge on the River Kwai*), D.O.P. Stanley Brede, Producer Bernie Girard (Playhouse 90) and art director Harry Horner (*Separate Tables*, *They Shoot Horses*) to bring in the 39 film series under a total budget of \$1,365,000—\$35,000 per film!

As first A.D. Peter would stalk on set with his heavy cane (purely a prop) and at the top of his voice whip crew and cast on camera almost before the director could say "roll it." Despite his stentorian tones Peter was always good natured; liked and respected by cast and crew alike.

The cast in those days included names to become household words in Canada—Frannie Hyland, John Drainie, Don Francks, Gilles Pelletier, Murray Westgate, Martha Henry, Millie Hall, Bruno Gerussi, Larry Zahab (Dane), Jack Creley, Barbara Hamilton, and so on.

In addition to his duties on set, Peter had to deal with Indians from Maniwaki, props and make-up, and the maintenance of a team of huskies for almost a full year. Incidentally, it was in connection with the dog team and especially her own pet setter that Peter had to do with Betty Kennedy of Front Page Challenge fame.

Canoes and ice blocks in rapids, wolves and bear cubs, Eskimos at Great Whale on Hudson Bay; Carter took everything in his stride.

Young Carter learned much from R.C.M.P. to undergo his later directorial career first in Canada (*The Rowdyman*) and later based in Los Angeles in such epics as *A Man Called Intrepid*.

However, that story is for others to tell.

Peter Carter and his talented wife Linda Renson are friends and associates I shall always remember with respect and affection.

Budge Crawley ●

You didn't just meet Peter Carter – you experienced him, which is exactly what I did in the late '50s. Peter was working as a First Assistant Director for Crawley Films on the R.C.M.P. Series. I was an aspiring young actor, having signed on as a stand-in/double for one of the stars of the series. My immediate impression of Peter was that of a rambunctious, wide-eyed, Cockney leprechaun who gave new meaning to the word "energy". I believe we liked each other instantly.

He was supportive of me, then, when I made my debut as a full-fledged actor, as he was much later when I became a producer, and we embarked as partners in two motion picture ventures – *The Rowdyman* and *Rituals* – his first and second feature films as a director.

Most knew P.C. professionally. Many knew him personally. Few, I am sure, knew him intimately. He was in many ways a private person. If you cared enough to know him, you may have observed his tendency to 'take to' and become friendly with obviously sensitive types or outrageous and colourful characters – I think, somewhat, a reflection of himself.

Film was so much his life, I think it only appropriate somehow to reflect on him in screen images:

Scene One: CORRIDOR – HOLIDAY INN – CORNERBROOK, NEWFOUNDLAND

Peter standing outside of Gordon Pinsent's room, mischievously directing the after-hours recreational activities of THE ROWDYMAN crew as they brace Gordon's door closed with a two-by-four and rope – securing Gordon inside for the rest of the evening.

Scene two: RITUALS PRODUCTION OFFICE – TORONTO, ONTARIO

Peter and I sitting quietly, tears welling up in our eyes, coming to grips with the fact that we had to postpone the production of RITUALS in 1975.

Scene Three: DESOLATE AREA – OUTSIDE OF WAWA, ONTARIO

Peter scouting locations. He steps over a hill, and there it is – A DISUSED DAM – with water roaring through a gaping hole in the centre of the cement holding wall. The generator house – worn by time! It was as though an Art Director had created it exactly to Peter's specifications. The look on his face – a boyish glow, as if discovering a new toy.

Scene Four: NORTH WOODS – BATHAWANA BAY, ONTARIO

Peter trudging through the North Woods, setting up shots for the movie RITUALS! Then he haphazardly wades into a rushing river – showing the actors that if he could do it, they could.

Scene Five: PETER – AT HOME – KITCHEN

The only other place that gave him as much comfort as a movie set – indulging in his favourite therapeutic activity – cooking up his gourmet delights, often enjoyed by me.

And on... and on...

I know of no other director in this

country whose background and history in this business was so varied and rich with experience. He took great pride in being a "pro" ... something ingrained in him over the years. His respect for the protocol of picture-making (i.e. his regard for the producer's function, the 1st A.D., the production manager, et al) and his commitment and faithful adherence to a budget and schedule was something to be admired and emulated. He was, for many novice directors, a definite and worthwhile part of their education.

I witnessed his growth over the years as a director, and it saddens me that his thrust to the greater heights I know he was capable of is no longer on his "shooting schedule". Maybe that's enough.

Lawrence Dane ●

I remember the first time I saw Peter. It was in the spring of 1963 and I had just left Young & Rubicam Advertising to go and work on this wonderful, mystical thing called a television series. I was in an office at 11 Yorkville and Maxine Samuels kept telling me about this incredible, knowledgeable, brilliant person coming from England. She talked so much about him that I thought I was going to meet a giant. And I did... but I didn't know it at first. Because P.C. didn't much like me... he didn't want me there, and I didn't know why.

The 'why' was easy. He had been told they had an experienced production secretary for him to work with and what they really had was this very green girl from the world of one-minute wonders. But we sorted all of that out very quickly. I told him I wanted to learn; and I couldn't have had a better teacher. P.C. knew it all. He had already been there and was eager to pass on all he had learned.

I think the thing that impressed me most at the time was that Peter allowed you to make mistakes... once! I was like the blank page in a book and he wrote on it. And he gave me a sense of worth and value and confidence. Confidence to the point that one day we stood in an office and screamed at each other. I was right...no, he was right, and we were both positive. Then he stopped yelling (and waving that famous stick he used to use) and said to me "you must be right, I taught you."

Well, P.C. did teach me. Not only about this crazed business we are in, but also about being a human being. A person who believes in what they are doing and always gives it the best shot they know how. I have so many vivid and marvellous pictures of Peter in my mind, and I can hear his voice. That unique, silly accent that he never lost and, more than that, which became a part of our own lives and vocabularies. I was fortunate to be a small part of his life and I will always cherish the names he gave me. To P.C. I was either Miss Haggard, or Auntie Karen, or Lady K. And I understood where each name came from and they made me special.

That was one of the things about Peter. He made all of us special. Because he was. And he shared himself so much. Knowing him made me better, and made me happy. I have a friend who wrote a song about his own father, but the words also seem to be for P.C. "His heart was as big as an old cook stove, and his feet were on the fly; And when he laughed I swear the sun never left the sky." Peter's sun will never leave the sky. A year ago Christmas I gave him a star. A

spot in the firmament that will always now be known as "P.C., Peter Carter". I'm not exactly sure where it is, but it will be easy to find. Just go out and look up. It's the bright one.

Karen Hazzard ●

Lyrics from: "Gypsy, Play My Song" used by permission of Ron Nigrini.

He was my first director and like all firsts he was unforgettable. I worked with him on three other films over the years. Those were official projects. Ones I got paid for. But there were other projects that fevered our imaginations for a while and then, for one reason or another, faded.

He loved to talk and argue and scheme and plot. But most of all, and this is what I will most remember him for, he loved to laugh. He had a zany, dry wit that bubbled with some of the most hilarious insights into some of the most arcane knowledge known to man. He was a wonderful story teller and it didn't matter if the story was based on a lot of truth, a little truth or just a grain of it, he had an intellectual generosity and the stories always had some meaning, some reason for being told. He loved to instruct and explain, and there was never any pomposity in his telling of things. He loved to explore and find out, to get to the bottom of things and his films were always sprinkled with truths and perceptions he uncovered as he moved through life.

He had a good life and it came through in his work and the way he treated his fellow man and they, in kind, treated him. When he lived here, his home was always filled with people, good cheer and good conversation. It was the same when he moved to California. His home was always open to his old friends.

He had a simple, uncomplicated courage that allowed him to deal with adversity straight on, and right away. He got things done, and always did what he said he would do because inside there was a tenacity and a real joy at being able to do things and make things happen. That is the trademark of any good director. But also what was wonderful was the way he transmitted this passion for doing things, surrounding those who worked with him in his cloak of confidence that made the impossible seem possible.

He lived hard, perhaps too hard sometimes, but well, and even in the bad times he had a rock-hard streak of decency that was bound to make many friends (and a few enemies). He moved through life demanding much of it, but giving much in return. Leaving himself open to its possibilities and wonder; and if in the end sometimes he didn't quite pull it off, he at least, by god, gave it one hell of a run for the money.

Ian Sutherland ●

It probably says something about our film history, but I wasn't sure we had one til Peter passed away.

I can't help feeling that when he went by, at least half the character of the film industry went with him. Talk about raw talent! To work with him or for him was to be strapped to a rocket which only he knew how to start and stop.

My very first sight of the man was one that I shall never forget. He was standing far enough off to be featureless – except that he was waving a stick – all alone,

and executing what I thought to be a remarkable imitation of a great bird. The sound that came from him shook other birds from trees and changed the course of planes. It sounded something like: "FAWWWWWK!" I later discovered that he used this to put films back on schedule.

There were two Peters at the very least. If you hadn't bothered to understand the outer one, then the inner one wasn't any of your business.

I think Peter had struggles within that even he did not have names for – but they were not small fights, if one knew the man at all. Each public advancement, for example, cost him a private wrench. Things were required of Peter that were not natural, that threatened his honesty in ways that were uncomfortable to watch.

As far as work was concerned... When you arrived at one of his sets – say on a cold autumn a.m. miles away in the country – you had better be filled with the same gas that that man had, but touching a chord in him at a rare defenseless moment, with a bit of acting that worked, was striking gold. Being the organization that was Peter Carter, one was not likely to surprise the man – but if one did, that wildflower opened up and it was rare to remember. I thank him for *Rowdyman*. He moved it like a flatcar, and we moved with it. The memory of that six-week burst of sunshine comes in handy during less productive and aimless times. Will Cole would say that he was 'Lovely, tell your mother!'

Again, when times are slow and I'm falling a bit out of love with the work, and it's all a bit of a "shambles," I'll think of Peter the man – tough as a walking bent nail – and feel like working again. Because the industry is a fact. With a bit of time and Peter's stick, we'll do 'er. Thank you mate!

Gordon Pinsent ●

I met P.C. on my first episodic film directing job – on Budge Crawley's R.C.M.P. series in the late '50s. P.C. was the first A.D., and we became instant friends. I so admired his intense energy and drive, coupled with his tremendous love for what he was doing, and a rather dare-devil attitude toward both his work and his life. He shared his cabin in the Gatineau, where I often stayed, with his stunning French-Canadian wife, Denise, and two runny-nosed, energetic baby girls – who have since become attractive young women.

In London, I used to drink with Peter at his favorite pub on Wardour St., the Intrepid Fox. Wherever he went everyone in film knew Peter – especially the girls. He was, at the time, often likened to James Dean, though in an competition for looks Peter would win hands down – his clear blue eyes, burning intensity, lightning-fast agility, shock of brown hair made him irresistible, though he was always very faithful to his mate. He had a large, ground floor apartment with Denise and the kids, and never stopped working; but somehow, I felt he longed to return to Canada.

The chance came when Maxine Samuels started her first series, *The Forest Rangers*. I suggested she call Peter. Even at that time, he was the best in the business. She did, and back he came. I would almost say it was Peter

Paul Almond ●

(cont. on p. 30)

Taking off

'Not a Love Story' in distribution

by Philip Szporer

You're a National Film Board distribution representative in Toronto or Ottawa, say, and you've got a problem. You're handling a film that everyone wants to see, and yet this very same film is banned by the Ontario Censor Board, forbidden public screening, forbidden even to be advertised. It can be shown in private screenings by invitation only. What's to be done?

For most NFB distribution representatives, the release of *Not a Love Story* nine months ago posed a major problem. In effect, they could barely devote time to any other project, so great was the pressure from people wanting to see the film. Still today, the public is flocking to a first viewing—at least where the film is available.

But in Ontario, the legal implications of the censor board's ruling forced distribution representatives to innovate. They now ask that people requesting the film for a private screening drop by and fill out an application, describing who they are, who is in charge of their organization, and how they intend to promote the film. This name, rank and serial number system was set up as a protective measure; many NFB employees in Ontario feared that any distribution representative there could be prosecuted if a group showing the film decided to advertise the screening.

The NFB is presently in contact with lawyers who represent it at the department of Justice in Ontario, and is planning to appeal the ruling of the censor board. Although a first appeal by the NFB before Christmas failed to overturn the judgment Bill Litwack, head of Distribution at the NFB, thinks "Now that the new Constitution is in place, there are any number of avenues we might take to try to get that ruling overturned. That is in the works now."

In the next few months, then, it might be possible to reverse that ruling and get the film shown publicly in Ontario. Until then, the distribution staff must be happy to hear that the Board will support them should any legal battle ensue over the film's distribution there. (Several had hesitated to handle it at the outset.) Says Litwack, "Obviously we would support our employees totally, although up until now, that has not been an issue. Luckily nothing has affected the status of any of the NFB staff."

While *Not a Love Story* has altered

the distribution representatives' sense of security and focus (in terms of distribution procedure), it is important—in view of the global release of the film (the film opened last month in New York, and in London)—to consider some of the options the film's success has placed clearly before the NFB. Will it now aim for a wider, more general audience with its films? If so, what outlets will the NFB choose for that exhibition? Are the outlets which currently exist adequate to reach the public or are more aggressive approaches in order?

Given the weight of the subject matter of the film, and the commentary which has surfaced subsequent to the film's initial release, the phenomenon of *Not a Love Story* has created an opportunity for the NFB's distribution division to confront the real issues it faces in the film market.

Because of its commitment to this difficult film, an incredible amount of pre-planning for its marketing was done. Special screenings were set up for religious groups, law enforcement officers, morality squads, and lawyers, in

order to solicit their interest and backing because, as Litwack admits, "we felt we might need their expressions of support."

NFB Marketing Chief Eric Cosgrove had wanted the test screenings because of the Board's "lack of experience with films of this sort, films which may come to the attention of the censor boards. We wanted to know more about whether or not the content, in spite of the intent of the film, would run afoul of the criminal code, the obscenity laws." This legal/market research was carried out throughout the country in 20 special screenings.

Audience reaction to the previews, attended by the various community groups and decision-makers mentioned above, plus women's groups and NFB staff, indicated that *Not a Love Story* was, in Cosgrove's words, "tough stuff," "hard to watch—not entertainment," but that a) there was nothing wrong with it; and b) it was time somebody made something on the subject.

If, during testing, the degree of support was heartening, the film hasn't always met with a great deal of enthu-

siasm. The Toronto film critics savaged the film when it premiered at the Toronto Festival of Festivals—a set of reactions NFB officials have found nowhere else in the U.S. or Canada. The festival period was unfortunate in many ways, but it did draw attention to the film.

The pre-planning management of the distribution of the film enabled those in the head office in Montreal to work closely with all the offices across the country. The experience of *Not a Love Story's* distribution has taught the NFB a lot; that is, it has shown that with the proper kind of preparation the NFB can prepare the terrain and really capitalize on the potential of a film.

The direct result of *Not a Love Story's* success has been to encourage those in distribution to do more pre-launch work; to try to prepare that target audience by identifying the public to be reached, and to use a variety of promotional means to inform those target markets about the film.

Still, when the Ontario ban was issued, the NFB reacted with surprise. Never before had the censors banned an NFB film. Although concerned about the possibility of censorship, the NFB had chosen to downplay the issue prior to the film's release. "To have critics and everybody pick up on the censorship thing would have detracted from the film itself," said Cosgrove. "But of course, what has happened in some interesting dynamic is that the ruling in Ontario has shown a great deal of light on the criteria used by the Ontario Censor

The censor board clearly considers the film to be pornographic, and, by failing to appreciate its 'protest qualities', is setting itself up as 'pro-pornography.' This is one point which cannot be ignored, says Sharon Moodie, a Montreal distribution representative.

"It let's 'adult entertainment' flourish, but it doesn't let people see there is another side. People have come to the screenings who have never thought about pornography... it has become a focus for solidarity. It's important for Ontarians to realize that you can have socially-responsible screenings. It may not be a great film, but it's an important film—too important to pass by."

Disappointment and frustration best express how the distribution people at the NFB feel about the way the ruling has come down. In mid-winter, Moodie said, "In Ontario people are being denied access to *Not a Love Story*. Perhaps 2 or 3,000 people have seen it over the course

The point of the film is to raise the question of what the images are; of pornography as political images within our society. The film is not about sex, it's about violence and power—women's bodies and sexuality as an expression of violence within our society. It raises the questions of what our society is—what the people want, what they're buying, what they're reduced to, and what they've come to. The isolation, the lack of affection, that sex is violent acts to peoples' bodies, not a celebration, affection and caring, feeling, and communication between people. This is the problem we have to cope with in Western society as a whole. It's... Western society—technological, industrial, capitalist—that has created this condition. And we're all living in it... That to me is what your movie's about.

— Amalie Rothschild, US filmmaker, speaking with Bonnie Sherr Klein, director of *Not a Love Story: A Film About Pornography*, and Anne Henderson, associate director and editor of the film, at the 7th Grierson Film Seminar, 1981.

Ms. Klein and Ms. Henderson agreed with this comment, and yet, Rothschild's response to *Not a Love Story* is one of the deeply-felt reactions which has surfaced after seeing this film.

To Bonnie Klein, the act of putting out the film was of great impor-

ance. In her words, the film could "draw women together of different languages," but whose experience of objectification was the same.

Even the graphic design for the film's posters and advertising involved producing something realistic and identifiable. According to Terry Richmond, NFB Specialized Markets Film Officer, three artists came up with images which would "speak strongly to women, and not alienate men." There was a need to "reflect the woman as wounded, yet strong." Chosen was a cubist drawing, not a pornographic image, but one suggestive of fragmentation: the body and soul spirit hurt or in pain.

At many of the public screenings, people have expressed the desire to have their children see the film, with parental guidance. According to Eric Cosgrove, the film will not be available for school screening. "Our policy is to ensure that the film doesn't scandalize youth, 'mess them up,' turn them off sex. The film was made out of frustration—this distortion of sex." But, one asks, isn't *Not a Love Story* a great, educational, instructive tool? He feels the subject has to be brought up with young audiences, but that this is not the film to do it. In his words, "the design of the film did not have young people in mind."

Philip Szporer is a Montreal free-lance writer, and a graduate student in Communications Studies at Concordia University.

Note: For the credits of *Not a Love Story* and reviews by Maurice Yacowar and Kate Jansen, see *Cinema Canada* No. 79, p. 36.

of the past months in little private screenings. What's that compared to over 30,000 people in Montreal alone? Over 65,000 have seen the film in a commercial cinema."

Recently, Ottawa representative Al Parsons commented, "I feel that the Film Board and the Ontario Censor Board share a common purpose... Unless people see the film, they won't help the cause."

Film Board features rarely succeed on the theatrical circuit, but the commercial engagements of *Not a Love Story* are breaking all previous attendance records. No one counted on the huge success of the film, given the difficulties of showing documentaries in a commercial situation.

Why has the film taken off? According to most of the people concerned, simply because there has never been anything like it. It is, in Cosgrove's words "investigative filmmaking into a taboo area."

Not a Love Story, as is widely known, was produced by Studio D of the NFB's English production branch. Founded in 1974, the studio comprises a network of women filmmakers working on the status of women in Canada, who attempt to utilize film as a consciousness-raiser. At Studio D, there was a concern that the film should be programmed - that out of the confusion after seeing the film, ancillary materials be furnished to help support the acquired learning of the audience.

At the beginning, director Bonnie Sherr Klein's film may have been intended as a discussion piece, a vehicle for women, to go from women's group to women's group. But no one foresaw how far-reaching the impact of the film would be, the extent to which men would be interested, and that it would open up people, and thus, be part of a healing process.

Initially, the strategy for the distribution of *Not a Love Story* was to reach as many people as possible but not through commercial theatres. If the response indicated theatrical potential, then it could be assessed province by province. NFB officials felt that if the film might cause problems in certain communities, it would not be worthwhile to open the film commercially in those communities. The NFB did not intend to cause problems in the community, and didn't want to taunt people.

It was finally the public demand which forced the distribution representatives to come up with alternative distribution strategies for *Not a Love Story*. In Montreal, advance screenings attracted 2,200 people to two shows on one night. In three provinces - Quebec, Manitoba, and Alberta - the distribution representatives couldn't meet the demand of people wanting to see the film, and it was released commercially. For an English-language National Film Board documentary, this was a rarity.

The situation is different in other parts of the country. Says Cosgrove, "Because we're dealing with community standards, we're extra-cautious, and we feel we can reach our objectives (in B.C. and the Atlantic provinces), with public screenings." (In NFB jargon, a "public screening" is a free-entry screening of a film in a church basement, a YMCA or other place where the public would have access.)

In Saskatchewan, however, a different kind of scenario has unfolded. Viewers in Saskatchewan are being denied public access to the film because of the provincial film classification board's refusal to

classify the film. The NFB can only offer the film to groups and individuals for private screenings. While the NFB is trying to figure out what it must do to have the film classified, the film has been in commercial release in Quebec, Alberta, and Manitoba for over seven months.

But what kind of audience had the NFB foreseen for the film? "From the outset you start thinking of audience from the studio's point of view," explained Cosgrove. "For a general adult audience, *Not a Love Story* is a powerful information tool. It is of prime interest to women, but it must be seen by men." The general strategy seemed to be to attract the concern of feminists in relation to the objectification of women: how women are portrayed in advertising with regard to the abuse of women. The target audiences were organized women's groups, and the legal, the religious and education communities. Then it was a matter of letting people know the film was around, what it was about and how important it was as a subject. Then, ways had to be devised to allow access to the film: theatrical, public, and invitational.

As a result of the distribution of *Not a Love Story*, access to the general public is foremost in the minds of the NFB marketing officials. They are trying to devise innovative ways to reach that audience. Originally, the NFB aimed for specialized audiences (community groups, special interest groups, generally people with some affiliation to a group). It was easier to circulate the films using specialized networks.

New emphasis is being made to move toward the general public, not at the expense of those specialized markets, but in addition to them.

The cultural role of the NFB in Canada involves having its many films seen by as many people as possible, but there has long been an ambivalence about using commercial circuits for its productions. Over the past two years, the NFB has put emphasis on its 'public exhibition program' in Canada, organizing screenings, and using the facilities of museums, universities, and film societies. Often the screenings are free of charge. Sometimes they are based on a repertory price scale, while occasionally a regular admission price is requested. But recounts Moodie, "A lot of energy and money is spent on a rental of a hall for a one-shot deal rather than a constant run."

Only now, propelled by the success of *Not a Love Story* are people at the NFB actively talking of a much wider distribution for their films. Invariably this comes up in discussion with the distribution representatives. "We are very fortunate to have found a commercial place for *Not a Love Story*, but we're in Quebec," says Moodie. "We're reaching people who would be less inclined to attend a public screening, simply because they're not part of those groups who organize the event. That we're reaching these people is really important as far as I see it. That is what is exciting about this particular film. Because of the notoriety of the film, and for good or bad, the overall effect is still positive. Hundreds of thousands will be seeing the film that wouldn't have normally seen it."

In the case of *Not a Love Story*, the film is provoking people and causing them to think, and many people probably do not like it, perhaps for those reasons. Says Moodie, "There is no doubt that it's an anti-pornography feminist film. That



● Linda Lee Tracey, a.k.a. Fonda Peters, explores the world of porn

is the power of the media of film - especially social documentaries like this. You can make the best social documentaries, but if people aren't seeing them, what's the point? Then you're essentially preaching to the converted. The public has to have access to us and if we had facilities, theatres across the country, it would be a lot better."

With the cooperation of the Cineplex chain, the NFB has begun to reach a wider audience. Cineplex couldn't have been better designed for NFB films, simply because the smallest theatre (in Montreal with a 69-seat theatre, and a 16mm screen), allows access to films which big theatres cannot handle. The success of *Not a Love Story* has encouraged the NFB to open several other films at Cineplex. Although none of these films have had anywhere near the success of *Not a Love Story*, showing documentaries in a theatrical context is an interesting initiative, and Litwack says the NFB will pursue these screenings with Cineplex and with other theatres which seem appropriate.

The NFB is also exploring the possibilities of reaching its public through television. Sandra Gathercole, former chairperson of the Council of Canadian Filmmakers and CRTC consultant, is of the opinion that the future of the NFB lies in television or, more generally, in electronic distribution systems.¹ Litwack agrees; the major way the NFB has reached the public through TV has been via the CBC. That is good for a number of films but the NFB now realizes that it must adapt to a television market - with cable, pay-TV, video-cassettes and the rest - in order to achieve maximum exposure. A study, "The Impact of New Development in the Subscription Television System in Canada upon Documentary Film at the NFB - A Comparison of the French and English Perspectives,"² prepared by Marie Brissette and Lori Stahlbrand of Concordia University, raises most of the salient issues concerning the Canadian film market system in the coming years.

Litwack explains that the Board's approach to that market will not be to produce for television, but rather to package existing films so that they can be seen on television.

This form of "narrowcasting" means "appealing to a smaller number of people, a more specialized audience; that is, two or three films put together to form a theme package, to get a message across. This would provide a more regular presence of the NFB on people's television screens," says Litwack.

Also on the horizon is a cost-recovery program, which will provide either partial or full-cost recovery. Right now, the library system provides NFB films for free. Says Litwack, "That has put us in a very difficult, no-win situation because

the better the films that production gives us, the better the promotional job that our distribution staff does, and, consequently, the more the demand. But we don't have enough money to supply the demand, to provide the prints in our offices, to provide the support material and the time of our staff, and that simply results in frustration, as most of our most popular films have a very large percentage of refusals through our library systems." Litwack does not foresee a system that would charge the high rentals that exist in the private sector. He simply would like people to get the films they want when they want them. By charging a small fee the NFB may be able to ensure that it can provide what people need, and also solve a major problem in terms of accessibility.

In conclusion, it is too easy to suggest that *Not a Love Story* sold itself. From the beginning, the marketing of the film has been handled with great care. When the distribution representatives first saw the film, they didn't know how the press or the public would react. "We wanted to make sure the film was promoted in a way that was consistent with the NFB image," says Litwack. What this meant was working so that people could not exploit the sexual content of the film - that the NFB not undercut the very serious message of the film by using inappropriate advertising. The NFB worked to make sure that the greatest number of people saw the film, but also, according to Litwack, to make sure that the audiences realized the film was not for everyone. Says Litwack, "We wanted to make sure that this film was not wrongly exploited the way other sexual material has been wrongly exploited."

The film has revealed that these are exciting times to be working in film distribution at the Board. But the experience with *Not a Love Story* has been enriching because of the risks taken at all levels at the NFB. Up until now there have not been enough Canadian films in the theatres. Hopefully, the production and distribution branches of the NFB have realized that there are films which are needed in the market, and that these films cannot be made without taking risks. We will see what the NFB will do with the management of English-language films, and if the Board is capable of bringing off further daring successes in the future. ●

1- Lyn Martin, "The NFB - Inventing Canada - Again?" *Cinema Canada* (September 1981), p. 32.

2- Marie Brissette and Lori Stahlbrand, "The Impact of New Developments in the Subscription Television System in Canada upon Documentary Film at the NFB - A Comparison of the French and English Perspectives," unpublished graduate paper, Concordia University, 1981.

In February, we got Cinema "X", reportedly the first hard-core film theatre in Montreal! Receiving widespread publicity, the theatre promised much; in anticipation of changes in Quebec censorship laws, it hoped to show an array of X-rated films. Then amidst much pressure from anti-pornography groups, the laws were not changed and Cinema "X" delivered little. Interestingly enough, elsewhere in the city, Bonnie Sherr Klein's anti-pornography film, *Not A Love Story* was also enjoying vast media coverage. The film is an important study which elicits provocative discussion of the problems pornography poses for society. Women, unfortunately, are the pawns in the porno controversy.

Pornography means megabucks! Whether it be Cinema "X" or boxes on

supermarket shelves, Sex Sells! Advertisements continuously use sex symbolism to sell their products - so much so, that consumers in our culture have subliminally equated buying power with being sexually desirable.

Adding to the porno debate is the apparent success of the video home recorder and its alliance with pornographic film. It is rapidly gaining popularity as new home entertainment for an upwardly mobile segment of the population. How is the VHR going to affect the sexual mores of our culture? The jury is still out on this question, but one disturbing observation is not only the fact that porno films are brought into the home via the VHR, but the kinds of porno films now mainstreaming into everyday culture. There are fantastic

selections of sado/masochistic films stressing brutality of every dimension and exploiting women at every opportunity. (One can find ads for these films in "adult magazines" to illustrate this point.) Cinema "X" may bring a new notoriety to Papineau and Beaubien, but the "true-blue" theatre fans are, in a certain sense, a lonely minority. The VHR is bringing it all back home!

Pornography has become insidious, permeating almost all aspects of everyday life. Problems spawned by the industry - film censorship, the disputed association between pornography and crime, are all controversial issues encountered by society. How are some Montreal women reacting to this burgeoning porno market? How do they feel about all this sexual hype and its effect on

today's culture?

Eight Montreal women, (seven of whom were married, one was divorced), were interviewed and shown several samples of pornographic images to prompt a discussion on pornography and its imprint on their lifestyle. Their responses proved to be interesting reflections on the middle-class sensibility in confrontation with this phenomenon.

Pornography affected the women in various ways. Some found it to be a strictly political issue, others were concerned that pornography placed a great deal of emphasis on cosmetic distortion. The women thought pornography was not only exploitive, but echoed the feeling expressed by Kate Millet in *Not A Love Story*, "... it's so unsexy." All expressed a certain degree of anger toward

PORNO

by Gayle Cohen

8 women speak out

Questions

The questions asked elicited a perspective on sexuality, pornography, and the media - film being the predominant issue. Twenty-nine questions comprised the original text, ten of which are listed here.

Oral sex has come to be a staple of pornographic literature and film. This motif has been most sensationalized and exploited in the pornographic film *Deep Throat*. This film, therefore, was singled out for the interviews for it is one of the most notorious of its genre.

Susan Griffin, author of "Pornography and Silence" says:

"Pornography is like a film that's projected on a blank screen and that blank screen is silence."

Here are eight women talking back!

Did you ever see a porno film? What was your reaction?

"Yes. I saw one as early as 1940 (with my husband), it was not a commercial film. I was nauseated - I walked away. I object to pornography when it becomes exploitive - women in chains, in Nazi uniforms, etc."

Belle L.,
university undergraduate,
age 70

"Yes. It was a turn-off, ridiculous, no art form, no eroticism in it."

Miriam S.,
Housewife,
age 35, B.Sc.

"All the time. It does not hurt to have a couple give more attention and concentration to the area of sexuality. Erotic films provide an outlet. Sometimes I suggest going to one - I think they're fun! The Story of "O" is one of the more superior ones. Porno films are by and large, rotten. The Devil in Miss Jones was stupid, dumb, and boring. The Naughty Victorians was not too bad, but it could have been a lot better."

Phyllis Y.,
Secretary, age 40,
high school graduate

"Yes. *Deep Throat*. I was 25 at the time and a lot more hung up. I saw it at someone's house with a mixed group of friends including my husband. I was embarrassed - I didn't know half the guys. I also saw porno films in Europe, the priest-with-the-little-girl type thing."

Phyllis K.,
teacher, group dynamics,
age 31, B.A.

"Sure - in a theatre in Denmark was the first time I saw one. It was a film plus a live sex show - it was pure embarrassment. Now when I see one, I become bored."

Maxine B.,
sex counsellor,
age 38, B.A.

"I have seen some porno films - real hard-core porno. Hard-core films don't appeal to my sense of aesthetic tastes or lifestyle. *Voyage En Douce* was a soft-

core film of a subtle lesbian relationship between two women. This was a film I liked."

Carol D.,
auctioneer's assistant,
age 43, B.A.

"Yes. It was ridiculous, hysterical, and boring. There was no acting, no plot, no direction - just people on the screen fornicating!"

Roslyn L.,
graduate student,
age 38, B.A.

"I have never seen a porno film in a theatre, only on television."

Linda C.,
housewife, age 35,
high school graduate

Do you feel that the media in general, and pornography in particular, victimize women?

"Victimization exists, but I find men are being exploited too. I think it is an area which feminists use as their platform for political purposes. Porno films include both men and women. I am not opposed to sensual items, for too long we have hidden our sexuality."

Phyllis Y.

"I always feel personally attacked when I see a "nudie" magazine staring back at me. On television and billboards you are constantly bombarded with an ass sticking out at you, as well as a nude upper torso! Calvin Klein jeans make me sick and other jean ads as well!"

Linda

"Pornography dehumanizes people. It makes me sick the message that we are getting. I deal with teen-agers a great

deal in my profession. I feel what they are getting at home and what they are getting from the media is a double-bind situation. This upsets me. It leaves the kids in a real state of confusion. 'You're just not cool if you don't fuck!' the media tells them. Yet, at home, they get, 'don't fuck - it's immoral, it's not allowed! The media, however, tells them, to be in you have to wear tight clothes, have big tits, and fuck like crazy. I feel the media bombardment of sexuality and its desirability is in direct contradiction to the adults who say don't. There is a major discrepancy between biological and cultural demand."

Phyllis K.

"No, I don't feel pornography victimizes women because I always feel there are dynamics that happen between two people - it is hard to tell which is the victim."

"I do feel, however, the myth in media is that if you buy the product you will become beautiful and handsome, and you will live happily ever after. The only reason magazines are put out is to make money. They make money through advertising. You cannot blame the magazines, the blame should be placed on the consumer - they are buying this "shit." Once again it is a question of giving the public what it wants, a lot of these magazines are successful. Women do not seem to mind or protest their image."

Carol

"Definitely! The accepted cliché of a woman's personality and function is portrayed in a false manner, e.g. commercials, magazines as well. The average housewife is depicted as the sensual

PORNO

the media - television in general, and the advertising field in particular.

Perhaps the most interesting observation was the manner in which the women "digested" the images at the end of each interview. A few of them were somewhat shocked at some of the illustrations and their comments were either severely curt, or extremely humorous. In some cases, however, embarrassment masqueraded as humour. When confronted with the actual pornographic detail, their gut feelings were revealed. The pictures, thus, proved to be a more succinct evaluation than the questions themselves.

All the women opted for freedom of choice, speech, and thought. The very same freedom enjoyed in our society fosters a liberal attitude toward pornography and its effects on society. This may be the "Catch 22." Some people feel this liberal attitude and the freedom we all cherish makes it difficult for a culture to distinguish works of art from garbage.

The women welcomed the opportunity to discuss their thoughts on the subject. The interviews prove the need

for films like *Not A Love Story*, a film that raises our consciousness about this timely issue.

In society we realize pornography presents many definite problems; unfortunately, there are no clear-cut solutions. Pornography is many things to many people; it is stimulation, compul-

sion, domination, obsession, and victimization. Pornography is also the perverse end of the economic scale that exploits women for maximum profit and marketability.



beauty - making cookies, washing floors - all carefully made up! All this to make her husband more potent! When I see the young women on Dallas, I want to puke! Their tits are sticking out, the jeans are tight to the girl's ass - the girl is a young adolescent! What kind of images are we creating? Is all this sexual hype fact or fantasy?

Belle

"When you see a woman abused in a porno film or in a magazine, I feel it victimizes her. I feel, however, it is more the women that are at fault. I feel it is the same as prostitution - it's their choice to go into it for the money. I cannot feel sympathy for them. Some women make themselves out to be scapegoats."

Miriam

"Pornography exploits women, women are portrayed as meat. I think the media in general sets up women to see them-

selves in these unrealistic ways and images. Women are constantly striving to mimic these images. This causes more unhappiness and frustration and produces, unfortunately, billions of dollars in sales. Women are hooked into this male image of female perfection!"

Maxine

"On one level it does. Magazines like Playboy and Hustler, etc. use women for commercial purposes, but these women earn good money. It becomes almost a status - The Pet of the Year. There is an ambivalence to the victimization. On the other hand, after seeing Not A Love Story, I really was overcome with a sense of certain women being totally victimized and manipulated by males for males. Women are posed or dressed in a certain way - in perfume, jeans, cigarette ads - making you feel if your lips are not pouting, your mouth is not open, you're not a woman!"

"On another slant, I can't stand those nauseating commercials on TV which present the woman on another level - a sexless, sloppy drudge. It victimizes the women by intimating, in order to fulfill the epitome of womanhood, you have to be a good housekeeper with an excellent knowledge of washing floors and cleaning toilets!"

Roslyn

Can you define "female eroticism"?

"Old films, forties films, are at times more erotic than the films of today, they have a sensitivity."

Phyllis Y.

"I think most films are made by men to make money. I don't think they care what they are doing - the ultimate dollar is the only denominator."

"I can't really distinguish "female eroticism" from any other eroticism. My own interpretation would be a dynamic interaction between two people. I really can't pinpoint to a physical thing."

Carol

"A sexual tension is erotic, a lot of innuendo. Body Heat, for example, the first love scene was very erotic, the tension was extremely heavy. Eroticism is a gradual build-up of emotion and desire, building up to a climax."

Linda

"Alice Munro in her short stories could capture an erotic scene here or there, or capture a woman's sexuality. Eroticism for me would be a sensitivity between the man and the woman, a certain amount of sex appeal in the man. The two films which have erotic content and are extremely successful in showing a female point of view are Coming Home and Body Heat.* Jon Voight was quite sexy in Coming Home and emanated a sexuality from the screen. I like to see love play - touching, feeling, naked bodies, and of course, sensitivity."

Roslyn

"Old Charles Boyer films, e.g. Casablanca. A romantic film, a film that takes a person from a meeting to a relationship. Also, how well the art of the film is done - photography, acting, story, etc."

Belle

"Sex with feeling is a turn-on. The kinds of things I like to see and make me want to be with my husband - films that show a loving couple in an attractive setting, the woods for example. A film I saw showed two young men in a loving relationship; the beauty and the closeness between them was a turn-on. This, to me, was erotic, rather than pornographic. Another film on massage was very

erotic for me, it would be a turn-on if someone massaged me that way."

Maxine

"The idea of two women together I find erotic. I like women's bodies, they are nicer than men's bodies, though I like men's bodies as well."

"In a film lots of things could be erotic. Lots of things about men are erotic - the sort of sexual teasing that goes on. The "zipless fuck" quoted by Erica Jong in Fear of Flying would be terrific and erotic to see. Seeing a woman making it with a priest or a homosexual would be erotic because it would be a challenge to a woman."

Phyllis K.

* **Body Heat** was a film mentioned by two women as being characteristic of portraying "female eroticism." This is quite interesting due to the fact, Lawrence Kasdan, director of **Body Heat** specifically chose a woman editor, Carol Littleton, to edit the film in order to give the film a female perspective of eroticism.

Have you seen Deep Throat? If not, have you heard about the film?

"No, I have heard about it; about a woman's clitoris being in her throat - the only way she can achieve an orgasm is by fellating a male partner. I think it is hysterical! A very funny idea!"

Carol

"No. I shy away from films that are based only on sex and have no other content."

Roslyn

"Yes. I thought it was stupid. I am not a prude when it comes to erotic films, but I prefer the dramatic ones. The comedy tends to be handled foolishly - it may be just the American ones I have viewed. The Story of "O" had a mystique about it, a mood."

Phyllis Y.

"Yes - boring."

Maxine

"No, I don't think I would want to. I have read articles about it. Strangely enough, sexual practices I was taught to believe are wicked are now acceptable to me, e.g. lesbianism, homosexuality, fellatio, and cunnilingus."

"Many sexual acts connotated as sexual deviations are arousing. The arousal is more important than the act. I feel partners, circumstances, tenderness are most important."

Belle

Would you protest the showing of porno films in your neighbourhood? Why or why not?

"I can't get terribly upset about it. I don't think exposure causes experimentation."

Maxine

"No. I believe the demand creates the atmosphere for porno films and theatres. Society will find its own level. The marketplace knows where and when to distribute these films."

Carol

"I wouldn't want them, but I have ambivalent feelings. I don't think we should censor them, people should have freedom of speech. Another reason why I would not want them is that it might incite sexual or violent aggression."

Miriam

"I don't care! It's my privilege to see what I want and vice-versa. I'm not going to stop you from seeing pornographic films. Porno films don't cause rape, violence, etc. If you want to live at the Beaver cinema, it is your privilege!"

Belle

"To tell you the truth, pornography is not on my list to make a fuss about because it really doesn't touch my life at all. That is a naive view, however. After seeing Not A Love Story, I must admit I was emotionally taken by the whole world of pornography and I would probably take a stand against it, if given the opportunity."

"I would protest it in my neighbourhood primarily because I feel it is totally uncalled for. On the other hand, I think it is totally unnecessary on The Main - or downtown. I don't buy the fact men have to see porno films in order to repress violent sexual urges."

Roslyn

"I wouldn't like to see porno films in my neighbourhood. I don't think it is necessary. In the same way I am opposed to pinball machine places. They create hang-outs which are not healthy for kids. They should have certain areas where these films should be shown."

Phyllis Y.

"I would be upset, but I would not protest it - that's the way I am. With all the home video equipment everything is available now for viewing - from "X" rated to Bambi!"

Linda

Do you feel porno films have increased violence, prostitution, etc.?

"No. I feel these conditions have existed for thousands of years. The Roman Empire was very decadent without the help of the contemporary media."

Maxine

"No, it's backwards. I believe prostitution increased violence, drug abuse, pornography, etc. I also believe literature and pornography show what is happening, they are reflections of a culture. They are expressions of society, rather than pornography leading up to violence and abuse, it is an expression of the world today."

Carol

"I doubt it, (laughing), I don't see a connection - how live sex shows would increase prostitution! My students went to New York and saw live sex shows but they didn't end up taking drugs. What message did they get from these sex shows, porno films, etc.? They were fascinated by what they saw, intrigued, but also turned off."

Phyllis K.

"It is a question of which came first - the chicken or the egg, one feeds on the other. I don't think if they eliminated pornography the other abuses would subside - the state of the world is too complex."

Roslyn

Do you believe in censorship? Are you in agreement with the rating system?

"I do not believe in censorship as a blanket word. I think child pornography is base. I find that terribly offensive, but I find censorship offensive as well. I don't think the censor has a role. Censorship is too biased - the word censor means bias, you cannot define whose bias is the right one."

"I'm still wondering how they rate films, what criteria they use. As a guide it works - like anything else, there is no perfection in this method."

Maxine

"I don't believe in censorship. Censorship doesn't ban pornographic films from being made, only viewed."

"I think films should be rated, but I do not think they are rated well. I don't feel they are rated to what is informative or a

reality geared to a child's or teenager's taste. e.g. The French Lieutenant's Woman is rated for all, yet I would not take my children to see it. There may not be foul language in it, but I don't think the subject matter would interest them. Subject matter has as much to do with the rating as sex or language."

Linda

"I think the whole censorship issue is a political one. The role of the censor is to try to control the mores of a society into a specific direction. Censors are picked by the government, so therefore the government is trying to keep up the status quo. I go along with it - let's just say the system works for me."

Carol

"In general, censorship goes against my grain - it smacks of fascism. A censor is completely irrelevant in today's lifestyle. In essence I agree with the rating system. In reality, however, it becomes silly - a film becomes restricted because of one or two explicit sex scenes and not because it may be violent."

Roslyn

"No. An important aspect is that it is completely ineffectual. It is controlled by economics. How can we control economics?"

"I don't think the rating system works; maybe there is a purpose to it. I do not think there is any way of forbidding a child or adolescent to buy, to read, to see a thing that you do not approve of. You cannot start to guide a child or adolescent at the age of twelve, it is too late."

Belle

"No, I don't like someone telling an adult what they can or cannot see. I think the rating system, however, is fine - it acts as a guide to the parent. It is the kind of control I agree with - the censorship should be in the home."

Phyllis Y.

"Not at all. It presents a somewhat different view when kids are involved. As for adult censorship, you end up getting these silly, uptight people doing the censoring. It takes away from my freedom of speech - I find this repulsive. Censors are trying to 'protect' us while getting their rocks off at the same time! If you don't like the films - don't sit through them!"

"Yes, I agree with the rating system, it gives you a clue."

Phyllis K.

Pornography causes distortion. Comment on this statement.

"Pornography does not cause distortion. Pornography is a view of something that happens, it emphasizes one part of life. Only the individual could decide whether it would be a distortion or not."

Carol

"The way pornography is slanted to present a kind of Aphrodite figure. A woman has to be odourless and hairless; yet odourlessness and hairlessness are not sexually attractive to many men. Women have to be submissive/ permissive and constantly available."

Belle

"It depends on how it is done. If porn is handled well: sado/masochism exists in The Story of "O". I do not believe that viewed by adults it would cause distortion, viewed by children, it would."

Phyllis Y.

"It distorts the perception of reality. Expectations are distorted, expectations as a lover are distorted. Men's expectations of performance, fat women wanting to look like Vogue models. Anything

that deflates a person's self-worth or self-esteem because they do not measure up. If you don't perform like a porno queen, look like a fashion model, fit a tight pair of jeans, you are not successful. It dehumanizes a person's self-worth."

Maxine

"Definitely. It presents a distorted picture - what people do with that in their minds, I don't know. Whether it causes a distortion I don't think so. Most people who went to see porno films found them boring. They went to see the films, but they did not incorporate them into their lifestyle."

Phyllis K.

"Yes. It is perverse distortion and perverse fantasy. It is certainly not a real concept. I guess there are people who want it to be real. Then again, reality, to some may even be a distortion."

Roslyn

In The Gazette, Montreal, Oct. 2/81, Al Goldstein, publisher of Screw, was quoted as telling The New York Times, (regarding home video cassette recorders), "... but the point of a porno film is to turn you on, and a theater isn't the best place for that. The ideal context is the home." Comment on this statement.

"I don't know that it makes a difference. I don't think 'Middle America' has the sophisticated equipment like the video home recorder - thus we are talking about a select group. I feel it is more exciting to go to a theatre, be turned on, have a long anticipatory drive home, building up a sexual tension."

Phyllis K.

"I think Al Goldstein is trying to sell his home video cassettes; that's all the comment has to do with it!"

Carol

"I agree with Mr. Goldstein, especially when dealing with porno films. I would watch them with my husband, but not with other couples, never in mixed company!"

Linda

"I don't know if I could be turned on at home by a porno film. I know couples who watch porno films at home - if it turns them on, it may add a dimension to their marriage. I carry a lot of baggage around with these films, so I react negatively to them. I also never had the experience of watching them alone with my husband."

Maxine

"Pornography would not turn me on at home or in a theatre. Objectively, I would imagine that watching a porno film in the confines of a bedroom would be convenient to acting on the emotional urges projected by the film."

Roslyn

"I would agree. My husband is interested in pornography, it turns him on. The bedroom is where sex belongs between two consenting adults, not in a crowd."

Belle

Are men retaliating against the feminist movement by depicting women in more abusive ways in the media?

"I am not an admirer of Margaret Atwood. All her men 'have teeth and bite'. In a sense, all feminists are over-reacting when they start to blame men for all the evils of society. On the other hand, some men may feel threatened by the movement. I feel there is too much aggression in the movement, but then, in order to make anything viable, you have to be an activist. Women are portrayed a bit too aggressive. Men are reacting by portray-

ing women in awful ways in pornography."

Belle

"No, pornography has existed for centuries. I do not think it is a reaction against the feminist movement. Certain kinds of pornography is a violent reaction against women, but not, necessarily against the women's movement."

Roslyn

"Unconsciously it may be so. It may or may not be a deliberate revenge. Men don't know how angry they are. It is almost a way not to deal with women (pornography). If you distance women and turn them into sex objects, you don't have to deal in relationships."

Phyllis K.

Images

The following are descriptions of four pornographic images from advertisements and over-the-counter "skin mags." These images were chosen because they are characteristic of the victimization women endure in pornographic content. The women were shown the pictures at the end of each interview and were asked to comment on them.

Two of the illustrations were ads - one was a lipstick advertisement from a fashion lay-out geared specifically to women. The other was for a pornographic inflatable "doll" that could be purchased through the mail. The figure in this ad, directed to male readers, was childlike in appearance, (pigtails and knee socks) and graphically posed. She was billed as "Suzie, The Snapping Pussy Doll - with a vagina that's ready to go night after night, time after time." She "never had a headache" and she possessed "lips that open to accept up to six inches of manflesh in deep throat fashion."

The other two pictures were a "typical" Playboy centerfold and a cartoon from Hustler magazine. The cartoon was quite nasty in its depiction of an "ugly," hirsute, woman-model. The woman, seated in a grotesque manner on a pedestal cum toilet, poses in front of a male artist, who is seen vomiting all over canvases strewn on the floor around the room. She was the inspiration for his "art" - a canvas full of vomit.

Lipstick

"This picture is blatant in its sexual overtones. The eyes are closed, the tube in the mouth. I don't find it offensive, but it's not going to sell me that lipstick. When I buy make-up, I know why I'm buying it. I know I'm not turning into a sex object. I never lose sight of who I am."

Maxine

"It sure ain't the real thing! I always buy lipstick but not because of the advertising. It's useless!"

Linda

"The ad is offensive. I think it is stupid as well. It is also funny, blatant - the phallic symbol sticking out of her mouth telling you to buy Chanel. Funny!"

Carol

"It's kind of neat - whoever thought that one up. I wouldn't buy the lipstick anyway."

Phyllis K.

"This is a perfect example of soft-core pornography. It looks like a penis in her

mouth. It is typical of the advertising media. A lipstick in the mouth seems natural. On the other hand, there is an overt connotation of oral sex."

Roslyn

"It is pornographic, it is actually a penis in her mouth. It is commonplace though. The symbol of a penis and a woman's mouth is constantly being used in pornography."

"I am more offended by showing children how to put on lipstick as a play toy. I feel it develops a negative set of values in very young children. The values instilled are, in order to be a complete and attractive woman you have to put on a false image. Adult women, though, can put anything in their mouths as far as I care!"

Belle

"It is striking because it is unusual. At first viewing it is not erotic. I guess one could say that it is."

Phyllis Y.

"I think it is interesting. It is not offensive, it doesn't make me angry. I think the photography is good. I think it is sensual. Done with good taste, people may not associate it with hard-core sex."

Miriam

Doll

"I think it's a riot! Really sick! What kind of man would hump into a vinyl doll? I love it! If I had an extra \$34.95 I'd buy one for a friend - he's very inverted! Snapping Pussy Doll - sounds like a tropical fish! It's a great big Barbie Doll! I wonder who actually buys these things. I can see buying it for a joke, I really wonder if people buy it to fuck it. It would make masturbation a lot easier!"

Phyllis K.

"What I find most offensive is the child role model. Sick. The advertisement is completely sickening."

Maxine

"It is not the ad that is offensive, it is the fact that somebody is actually going to send away for it! A reflection on our society. It is done to make money, if he's got consumers, he's got business!"

Carol

"The sad thing is that some poor man will pay \$34.95 for an imitation of what he thought he was going to get in the mail - the doll will never live up to the illustration! It is a sad comment on our society when men and women are encouraged to interact with dummies!"

Roslyn

"I feel it is ridiculous, funny. How many people actually buy these? Has it ever been documented how many people buy them? Someone once asked Guccione, (publisher of Penthouse), what is the difference between him and a pimp? He had trouble defending himself. The magazine is sort of acting like a pimp in selling the doll."

Belle

"Who would want it? Someone who wants to make money and contrives this up, I understand; but who would want to buy it - this I do not understand. Unfortunately we live in a society where the dollar is very important, so you can see how someone would develop something like this. We also live in a society that is getting more individualized and segregated. The doll becomes a substitute for a woman, a sexual relationship. This lack of interaction is quite pronounced in our society today."

Miriam

"Disgusting! This type of thing shown

in Penthouse all the time. I don't like seeing that part of the anatomy."

Phyllis Y.

(Phyllis was extremely put-off and uncomfortable with the photo in front of her. She also had difficulty saying the word, vagina)

Cartoon

"I don't like slapstick - it reminds me of that type of humour. There is nothing creative or intelligent about this cartoon - I don't respect it. Just gross!"

Miriam

"Disgusting!"

Phyllis Y.

"Offensive and silly."

Maxine

"I don't get it! I don't think it's funny. She is not too attractive. Mind you, he's no prize either! I guess I wonder why she is letting him do this to her - it is not very pleasant."

Phyllis K.

"The cartoon is not offensive to me. It's humour and humour is a caricature - I can't take it all that seriously. I think it is clever. It is not only a comment on a woman's sexuality, it is also a comment on art!"

Roslyn

"Disgusting isn't it? The female is unattractive. She has all the attributes that a "Venus" is not supposed to have, hair on her ass and legs. A very, very unattractive body and face."

Belle

Centerfold

"Pretty girl - does nothing for me intellectually."

Maxine

"Erotic, men would find it erotic. Beautiful woman. I do not like films or pictures that show that part of the anatomy in that way."

Phyllis Y.

"I don't know about the picture or what to make of it. They are obviously trying to portray an erotic woman - trees in background, flowers in her hair, shadowed opening between her legs. I find it 'nothing.' I wish her other breast would show, she looks distorted. The ribbon bothers me - it must mean something. I think the ribbon is in the picture to prove a point, either she's tied up like a little present - or all wrapped up!"

Carol

"There is something about her I don't like. I don't think women sit around like that. She's not gross, she has beautiful legs. A real turn-on for men is watching women masturbate. The magazines show you all these female bodies, people don't actually look like this - bodies must be air-brushed."

Phyllis K.

"I am immediately prejudiced against this picture; I know it came from Playboy. There is no erotic vibration for me. The whole thing is very sterile, even her so-called look of ecstasy."

Roslyn

"This type of pose is becoming commonplace. A man looks at Playboy and gets a message. This picture tells him, this is what I should be getting. The man has been married for 30 years and his wife looks like the picture we saw in the cartoon. So therefore, pornography does distort - how can they say pornography is not a distortion!"

Belle



"The old tart has been spruced up again, once more resplendent in its late Victorian wedding-cake elegance. The most un-ladylike manifestations of the vulgarity of the past two weeks – regrettable, but oh so financially remunerative – have all but been effaced, and the Carlton Hotel is free once more to pursue its more refined, if equally meretricious, way of life. All of which is proof irrefutable that the 35th annual Cannes Film Festival is now a thing of the past.

"Perhaps it is the end of an era as well, for next year the old Festival Palace will lose its status of central show case to a mammoth new Festival Centre, which, almost completed, already is a blight on the *Vieux Port* of this beautiful city, its concrete-and-glass ugliness – yet one more monument to contemporary architecture's descent into utilitarian barbarism – desecrating the surrounding sea and mountain landscape.

"Will this affect the spirit, perhaps the very nature, of a Festival which continues to dominate the world scene, or will...? Time alone will tell, for the Cannes Film Festival has no equal in its ability to adapt, to turn everything to its own profit. If one thing is clear from this year's event, it is that, far from betraying any signs of fading away, the Festival is gearing itself for at least another thirty-five years of frenetic activity."

These words were penned over a month ago as an intro to his 1982 Festival report by the present dedicated scribe, who then had to quit, finally succumbing to the effects of flu and anti-biotics (as conscientiously reported, *bien sûr*, by Bruce Pittman and this mag's editors last issue). But why sacrifice such fervid stylistic stuff, since it still more or less applies, and especially since I have had to write and suffer through the creation of seventeen intros to seventeen reports for *Cinema Canada* and its predecessors these last seventeen years.

Fervid stuff indeed, and that seemed to be what was in store for us this year, because Cannes (the Festival) was sup-

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Carry on Cannes!

by Marc Gervais

posed to be in deep trouble. The obscenely high prices, the destructive competition from the American Film Market held in Los Angeles, the big controversy in France itself over the official French selections – on and on went the refrain about a possible demise.

And for a Canadian, well, nobody from Canada was going, right? L.A.'s where the action is.

The party's over, the reports are in, and, of course, the reality is something else. As a matter of fact, most folks consider 1982 a vintage Cannes year – *ou presque*. There were more journalists than ever, we are told (a mixed blessing, to be sure). And the crowds have *not* diminished. Moreover, the film market, far from succumbing to the L.A. challenge, had as many films on display as ever before (we are equally told). Finally, the quality of the films in the official selection was deemed by more than a few as among the best in years. – More about that later.

One can take all of this with a wee grain of salt, to be sure. Nonetheless, the Cannes Film Festival this past May was, over-all, a success. If less bloated, and therefore more comfortable, than it was a few years ago. Cannes '82 showed no signs of significant decline. Once again it served as a matchless microcosm of the larger film life spread around our global village.

The entire global village, that is, with the notable exception of Canada. As a matter of fact, one is tempted to ask if Canada really was at Cannes this May 1982. What kind of show did our film community put on, how does our coun-

try's production stack up against the rest, where does it seem headed, etc.?

To begin with the (very brief) good news: there was, of course, Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, a filmmaker who is invited to Cannes every two or three years, usually as part of the prestigious *Directors' Fortnight* (*La quinzaine des réalisateurs*). Lefebvre is a remarkable man, doggedly creating his own *cinéma artisanal* his own way, against every dictate of the present feature film system dominating Canada. He is too old still to be considered an *enfant terrible* (oui, Jean-Pierre, it happens to all of us!), but Lefebvre retains his peculiar mixture of hip sophistication and naiveté/passion, pouring himself into each of his movies, expressing the way he feels about life at whatever stage of his own personal evolution he may be experiencing. Undaunted, and against staggering odds, he goes on struggling for a truly national cinema in his own understanding of the term; and far from succumbing to discouragement or bitterness, he actually seems to be arriving at some kind of mature plateau, a new awareness of certain simple human values with serenity just a step away.

His feature *Les fleurs sauvages*, was well received, winning the international critics' FIPRESCI award. And so, by all indications, Lefebvre will labour on, working with tiny budgets, creating his own audience, with a cinema that is ever young, "difficult" in its refusal of easy commercial film language – and finding a positive response in many parts of the world.

Ted Baryluk's Grocery, a lovely and well appreciated study of Winnipeg ethnic life by John Paskievich and Mike Mierus, was part of the official selection

for short films; and naturally it furnished yet one more example of the National Film Board's high standards. Another aspect of Canada's developing film life was the indefatigable Serge Losique's presentation of a program of short films by students from his own Canadian Film Students Film Festival – surely a first for Cannes – within the context of the Directors' Fortnight.

And that was just about the extent of the Canadian story at Cannes this year, or at least its positive side. The other aspect, the Market Place, where some three or four hundred features are on display annually, and where Canada has expended so much effort these last years, was strictly no show. Four or five Canadian features, plus a few repeats from the past presented by their American distributors (and not as Canadian films, but American), plus a few promos and video cassettes – such was Cannes '82 as far as Canada was concerned.

This was probably the quietest, least visible Canadian presence I have encountered in all these blessed seventeen years at Cannes. Gone, of course, was the hoopla of a few years ago. Gone, too, were most of the occasions for Canadians and others to meet Canadian journalists were in evidence, and so were various federal and provincial agency reps; but where were the producers (a few), the actors, directors – the rest of the film community?

The saddest Canadian casualty in all of this was the drastically reduced *Cinema Canada* – not the magazine, but the Secretary of State's official Canadian office headed by Jean Lefebvre and Jacqueline Brodie.* For years the best organized and most popular of all national film offices in Cannes, *Cinema Canada* saw itself reduced from its suite of four or five rooms at the Carlton to one. Its only official activity, in addition to being of service to Canadian journalists, centered on the few films (mentioned above) representing Canada in

* Although Gervais refers throughout this article to the Film Festivals Bureau as "Cinema Canada", that name has officially been abolished. The activities of the Bureau at Cannes were designated as the "press and documentation branch of Film Canada." There is concern that the Bureau itself may soon be merged with the CFDC as a permanent part of Film Canada. Ed.

FESTIVALS

any of the *official* selections or manifestations.

And so this year the nerve centre (one is tempted to say the heart) of the Canadian community was non-existent, and so much expertise, experience, and good will languished relatively unexploited in the radically reduced role that is now Cinema Canada's.

The *commercial* side of Canadian features was handled instead by the Canadian Film Development Corporation's CFDC Film Canada, which occupied a stand on the second floor of the Festival Palace - a sort of return to Canada's way of life some dozen years ago.

The result was typically Canadian (to put it charitably): two reduced areas, a divided presence, no centre. This becomes particularly bewildering when one compares the magnificent Australian presence, or the Scandinavian, or even the New Zealand, or...

Without returning to some of the hype aspects so criticized by (some) Canadian journalists in the past, surely the Canadian agencies need not go all the way in giving the impression that Canadian film is all but extinct? If it is worth going to Cannes at all, it is worth giving a positive and vital image of this country's feature filmmaking. Otherwise, our official presence at this, the world's most important film function, is self-defeating.

Behind the phenomenon, of course, loom certain realities. One centres on the role of the Festivals Bureau (Cinema Canada) and of the CFDC (Film Canada) - who or what is best for our image at the major film festivals?

The other, perhaps even more fundamental reality: the growing tie-in between Hollywood North (Canada) and Hollywood South (Los Angeles). This is the heart of the matter, the centre of controversy, the source of the present confusion, contention, elation, discouragement, what have you, depending on whom you talk to in this schizophrenic

state of affairs that is Canadian feature filmmaking.

If indeed American film distributors are to call the shots for Canadian features (and therefore control much of the film-making) then why bother with the other film markets around the world - and why Cannes? And what chance do Canadian independent distributors have when the game belongs to the Hollywood-and-its-Canadian-branch-plants mentality: how can Canadian independents buy "other" films if the U.S. is both our sole supplier and unique distributor?

I am caricaturing, over-simplifying, and exaggerating - to a certain extent. But many fear that certain very powerful sectors both at the policy-making and the production levels are hell-bent on total integration with U.S. film, without perhaps realizing the consequences of such a process.

Or, to repeat what has become a tragic cliché for those who believe that there should be an independent Canadian feature film production: a country that does not control its own distribution and exhibition cannot control its own filmmaking.

...

Comments such as the above can easily be distorted into some sort of self-serving, or silly nationalistic narrow-mindedness or excess, an excess which finds little reflection in world cinema - or at least so it would seem judging from Cannes '82.

For one thing, the filmmaker's nationality often in no way corresponds to the country he represents or in which he shoots his film. Here, for example, was Werner Herzog representing Germany with a film shot in Peru about one Brian Sweeney! The two *grand prix* winners, *Yol* and *Missing*, one directed by a Turk (Yilmaz Guney) for Switzerland and France, the other by a Greek living in France (Costa-Gavras) for the U.S., further

attest to this phenomenon. Poland's Jerzy Skolimovsky represented Britain with *Moonlighting* and Germany's Wim Wenders (*Hammett*) and Britain's Alan Parker (*Shoot the Moon*) were other foreigners flying the American flag.

At a deeper level, too, nationalism, or should one say ideology, found little exposure on Cannes' screens. Even "political" films such as *Yol* and *Missing* were more of an outcry against injustice and totalitarian regimes than special pleading for this or that political orientation; and the Taviani brothers, those convinced advocates for the Italian left, were far more interested in the *people* living through *The Night of San Lorenzo* than in any ideas advocating Marxism.

It was as if *all* ideologies, be they of the right or of the left, have been so discredited by their proponents in recent history that serious filmmakers simply can no longer find validity in commitment to any of them. Moreover, if a few major directors such as Godard and Antonioni seem to have given up on the human condition, it is within a political vacuum that they chase their own (ultimately) *personal* demons of alienation or whatever. Most of the films, on the contrary, are reaching out hopefully, positively, rejecting the madness of the arms race and the butchery of local wars, in favour of a simple way of life, an ability to live with oneself and with others. Very simple, basic stuff.

That, it would seem, was by far the most commonly shared message at Cannes this year in a Festival that by and large strayed very little from tried and true aesthetic paths. Even from names made glamorous or controversial in the recent or not so recent past (Antonioni, Anderson, Godard, Costa-Gavras, Scola, Herzog, the Taviani brothers, Skolimovsky), there were few radical departures, no exciting new developments, nothing that made this festival truly memorable. Rather, a series of quality movies con-

firming the trends of recent years, and witnessing to the fact that film techniques and technology are now pretty universally mastered, was unrolled on the screen of the Festival Palace. But dazzling, novel, poetic inspiration? Not this year.

A few comments, then - the fruit, naturally, of one's preferences, or special interests, or (above all) the limitations caused by having to choose from among four-hundred movies:

France, the host country, went for new faces this year, without much success - even though three old *nouvelle vague* names were available. Alone of the three Jean-Luc Godard was invited. Sad to say, his *Passion* merely confirmed that Godard is still trapped in a self-created impasse. Each film continues the perpetual unmasking of film art, the destruction of whatever it is he is creating on the screen. One is left with nothing - no spontaneity, wit, humour, humanity, not even his old but now discarded Maoist ranting. As the Godard film unrolls, it's a bit like watching a snake devouring its own tail - without the attendant horror. Boredom is all.

Of the other two *nouvelle vague* efforts that might have better served the Festival and its audiences, Eric Rohmer's *Le beau mariage* (I must admit after a Paris viewing) is very minor Rohmer indeed, too redolent of uninspired *déjà vu*. Chabrol's *Les fantômes du chapelier*, on the other hand, is marvelously crafted, a sort of inner Hitchcock without the tricks, and surely among Chabrol's finest efforts.

Italy, as usual, had too many films at Cannes. Ettore Scola's *The Night in Varennes* is self-indulgent pretentiousness, and offers further proof that the energetic Signor Scola is one of world Cinema's most over-rated directors. Much more interesting is the Michelangelo Antonioni case. Antonioni, one realizes with astonishment, will be



FESTIVALS

seventy next September. Alas, his *Identification of a Woman* testifies to a drying up of inspiration. Gone is the strange, desolate poetry and the deep sense of mystery that made his difficult middle films so haunting. Still the supreme craftsman, still very much a contemporary voice – still relevant, in other words – Antonioni lacks the magical touch that brought life to even his most desperate elegies to alienated modern man.

The Taviani brothers, on the other hand, presented the best Italian film in Cannes this year, *The Night of San Lorenzo*, a strident, warm-hearted operatic tale that takes place near the end of World War II. There is nothing quite like a Taviani film; and the brothers, along with Ermanno Olmi, are probably the finest filmmakers at work in Italy today.

West Germany: Only a few weeks after the Festival's close, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, the most prolific, as well as probably the most erratic, brilliant, and alienated of Germany's new wave directors, died in rather tragic circumstances. But the German cinema goes on much in the image of Fassbinder's work; and three of its films in Cannes were of particular (and peculiar) interest.

Obviously the Germans are still grappling with their Nazi-shattered national psyche. Perhaps that is why old myths or desperation genres or crazy stories found such favour with their directors this year. Wagner's *Parsifal*, no less, filled the Palais screen for over four hours with Hans Jurgen Syberberg's mystical images. Werner Herzog went a step further in the bizarre and the operatic: his *Fitzcaraldo* tells the story of one man's obsessive determination to bring opera to the jungles of Peru, even if it means crossing a mountain with a ship – which is exactly what both the hero of the story, and Herzog himself, succeeded in doing while taking four years to complete his film. A self-portrait, if ever there was, of the weird and wonderful Mr. Herzog, *Fitzcaraldo* is enchanting with its glowing, haunting background of Peru's rivers and mountains and forests.

Finally, in another obsessional effort, this one for producer Francis Ford Coppola, Wim Wenders was able to complete *Hammett*, a film noir in colour, a strange interweaving of events in Dashiell Hammett's real life with his fantasy creations, replete with *Maltese Falcon* in-jokes and a profoundly self-conscious sense of social and philosophical malaise. (Whew.)

Eastern Europe: Unquestionably the most daring political film shown at Cannes, the Hungarian Makk's *Another Look*, was also one of the finest. The sensitive treatment of a love affair between two women serves as the pretext for a stinging condemnation of the Hungarian regime – but done with delicacy, nuance, understanding, and the aesthetic richness that characterizes so much of the Hungarian cinema. Another political parable, *Moonlighting*, by Poland's Jerzy Skolimovsky, and shot in England during Poland's recent agony, centres on those events through the improbable activities of "illegal" Polish carpenters in London. At once funny, tough, and tragic, *Moonlighting* signals a minor break-through by bringing a much-needed simplicity to Skolimovsky's work, complementing his habitual Kafkaesque humour, his sardonic sense of absurdity and despair.

Australia: The Australian story goes on, still serving as a marvelous model for what Canada could be. Mind you, the Australians can match Canadians any time when it comes to putting themselves down. Predictably, therefore, the advance reports from Aussie-land were anything but promising. After all, the recently implemented tax write-offs were too good to be true (150% over two years, plus profits up to one-half of the investment!), and everyone knows what happened to Canada and its write-off-created boom.

True, there was no Aussie film in the official selection – thanks to the Festival's time-honoured and shameless favouring of France (understandable), Italy (gross), the U.S., and, to a lesser extent, Britain. But the bad news ends there. The Aussies produced some 30 features last year, about 20 of which they brought to the Cannes Market. This did not include their most popular film, *The Man from Snowy River* – an epic created from Banjo Paterson's classic boy's poem (starring Jack Thompson and Kirk Douglas), which is breaking box office records Down Under – nor

imitations of what is worst in the American cinema, or embarrassing exploitation ventures.

Fortunately, since American distributors have decided that Aussie films can make money, many of these movies are finding, or will find, their way on to Canadian screens (which is good news for us, and good \$\$ for the Australians). But what an irony! Australia's Mike Harris, head of marketing for their films in North America, is looking for ways to unlock Canada from the U.S., so that he can deal directly with Canadian distributors, instead of through American! (Need we say more?).

The Nordic Countries: Finland, not enamoured of being included under the banner of "Scandinavia", prefers "Nordic" to cover itself and Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Iceland. The Nordics, then, try to work together... and together means about 20 million people in all. Dividing that figure into five independent countries points up how small each population – and home market – really is. And yet their governments insist on giving home feature film pro-

fact, though, is that few may find their way onto our screens, for the usual reasons. Unlike the Australians, the Nordics have a real language barrier; and, given the appalling North American cultural narrow-mindedness (reflected in the economics of distribution), the results are predictable. The Nordics, however, go on making good movies, culturally valid, interesting and entertaining. And they continue in their efforts to break through onto the international scene, to break through, that is, the strangle-hold of American-dominated world film distribution.

The U.S. of A.: There is little need here to discuss Costa-Gavras' zappy *Missing* (grand prix plus best actor for Jack Lemmon) and Alan Parker's excellent, but generally underrated, *Shoot the Moon*. The U.S. goes on supplying the world with a big share of its best films, and this year the pattern was no different. What was significant at Cannes '82, however, was the closing event. As previously indicated, there had been no extraordinary film in evidence this year, no event that generated real Festival excitement. Nothing of that sort, that is, except E.T. Shown out of competition on the last day, Steven Spielberg's delightful sci-fi fairy tale had everyone – including jaundiced critics – laughing and crying and cheering. Seemingly effortless, and witty, intelligent, ironic, with marvelous gadgets and effects, Spielberg's film is anchored solidly in hip youngster Middle-American suburbia, clichés and jargon included. And yet he succeeds in investing a very commercial movie with an in-felt sense of poetry, wonder, idealism, hope, profoundly rooted in the Judaeo-Christian ethic and mythology. A remarkable feat indeed – and go and see it again with your kids: the popular, mass-audience cinema at its best.



anything by its two top directors, Peter Weir and Bruce Beresford (his latest, *Puberty Blues*, is all but completed).

I was lucky enough to see eight of their Cannes offerings; and once again the sheer quality, craftsmanship, and intelligence are striking. No filmic masterpiece in the lot, to be sure; but quality, yes, and a sense of their own lives, their country, the human heart, "little things" like that. By now the world has cottoned on to Australian film, to Australia's own blend of excellence and fun.

Most of the films centre on contemporary issues – partially in response to Australian complaints that they were seeing too much "historical stuff". The one exception that I saw: *We of the Never Never*, a breath-takingly photographed story of the outback. Add to the honourable list *Winter of Our Dreams*, Gillian Armstrong's *Starstruck*, *Fighting Back*, *The Killing of Angel Street*, *Heat Wave*, *Monkey Grip*, *Squizzy Taylor*... the skills are manifest, the films reflect relevant contemporary situations, they are entertaining, they face up to where most people live... and most are not silly

duction a priority status, for cultural reasons. So the Nordics came to Cannes with no less than 30 features, six of which I saw in the Market.

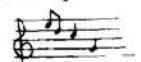
Ingmar Bergman is back in Sweden for keeps, just finishing his "last" movie (don't bet on "last"), the eagerly awaited *Fanny and Alexander*, "the most ambitious and expensive Scandinavian film ever." But there were some quite remarkable Swedish films on display nonetheless, including Vilgot Sjöman's *Am Blushing* and especially Hans Alfredson's *The Simple-Minded Murderer* – complete with Wagnerian angles and operatic (again!) outbursts. Finland's epic war (1939-44) film, *Sign of the Beast*, witnesses to that country's impressive ability, as does Vibeke Lokkeberg's *Betrayal* (also set just after the war) for the Norwegian film industry. The Danes, not to be outshone, presented Henning Carlsen's *Your Money or Your Life*, a fine contemporary study; and above all a remarkable, sensitive story of early teens in school, Nils Malmros' *The Tree of Knowledge*.

Six films seen, and all six of them excellent each its own way – the sad

So the Festival ended on a high, futuristic note, a fitting one, really, for an extraordinary yearly event that switches gears for next year's new locale. Switching gears for certain, as last decade's sci-fi is this year's and next's technology: new production and new exhibiting technology, erasing the distinction between "old" movies and "old" T.V. with the two-thousand line home screens ready to mesmerize us with their super video-cassettes, Pay T.V. – the works... Prodigious change is already upon us, the signs of which were in evidence all through Cannes.

Canada's next-to-no-show performance at this Festival may or may not have been of significance, but we are all part of what is going on, as a matter of fact we are seen as the world's leader in applied communications technology. Hardware, si! Software? Right now the Canadian fate is being decided, the potential is enormous, in either direction: our national production has a chance of blossoming as never before, or we can become a country with all the gadgets, all the windows, but with nothing to say about ourselves. And the world is watching us, trying to learn from our experience.

In that sense, at least, the Cannes Film Festival and similar events are major indicators. One hopes that next year...



... seems we've heard that song before, but perhaps never with such urgency.