Scoring

It is an analogy for an entire industry gone sour.

One wonders why English Canadians make such wretched films about the Quebecois experience. The political and sociological issues in that province offer a hotbed of moral dilemmas that would intrigue any writer. A love story unfolding against the backdrop of political upheaval is a tried and true cinematic genre. What went wrong with Scoring? Quite simply, the makers of this film got greedy. They wanted the whole audience pie and in their zeal to please everybody, they pleased nobody. Just precisely when and where they lost faith in their product is not clear. But the net result is, Scoring isn't much of a love story any more. As a political drama it is not just to be taken seriously and as far as those Animal House fans are concerned the movie is a joke - a bad one. Scoring is, instead, a mish-mash of genres that really succeed in only one thing - further alienating the already beleaguered Canadian film audience.

The idea for the film was a good one and with Bill Lamond and John Dunning, have thrown caution to the winds and charged at their subject matter in the most confrontational, emotionally manipulative manner possible. These guys have taken on the sorest points of both Canadian and American culture and jabbed at them with ice picks. Facts may be facts but these writers need to be informed that fiction is quite another matter. Lamond and Dunning are so determined to give us the goods that they forgot to give it to us good. The narrative frequently grinds to a halt so that we can profit from a much needed Canadian History lesson. Any sense of drama has been lost because of the persistent need of these writers to be taken seriously and as far as we are concerned, they can't eat their principles, they are just not to be taken seriously and as far as we are concerned, they should never see him coming at you with a scalpel; goes to McGill University and falls in love with a young Quebecoise woman, Claire Pimpare. She is a traditional homemaker French Canadian girl with the hot blood of revolution coursing through her veins. One look at her charging about Montreal painting the town with separatist slogans and her world is broadened.

The political and romantic themes of this script the writers then go for the jugular. House stuff. Someone throws up on camera, thankfully) into an aquarium, we get a belch or two, lots of beer, some schoolboy highjinks. It all looks rather half-hearted. The film just isn't funny enough to sustain these groans and consequently they feel like an afterthought. Like it or not, Meatsballs was a well-constructed film script. The set-ups were so shamelessly obvious that you half respected them. Furthermore, they belonged in a kiddie summer camp so you didn't even bother resisting them. Somehow in the context of the War Measures Act and the war in Vietnam, those gags don't just seem out of place, they're downright obscene. All things having failed, Scoring ends by going full tilt into melodrama, aiming for an emotional manipulation so extreme and powerful but you can understand why they felt this way - the winds charged at their subject matter in the most confrontational, emotionally manipulative manner possible. These guys have taken on the sorest points of both Canadian and American culture and jabbed at them with ice picks. Facts may be facts but these writers need to be informed that fiction is quite another matter. Lamond and Dunning are so determined to give us the goods that they forgot to give it to us good. The narrative frequently grinds to a halt so that we can profit from a much needed Canadian History lesson. Any sense of drama has been lost because of the persistent need of these writers to be taken seriously and as far as we are concerned, they can't eat their principles, they are just not to be taken seriously and as far as we are concerned, they should never see him coming at you with a scalpel; goes to McGill University and falls in love with a young Quebecoise woman, Claire Pimpare. She is a traditional homemaker French Canadian girl with the hot blood of revolution coursing through her veins. One look at her charging about Montreal painting the town with separatist slogans and her world is broadened.

When the screenplay was first developed, it was no doubt, intended as a serious dramatic exploration of two concurrent protest issues - the burgeoning of the Quebecois identity and the war in Vietnam. The narrative unfolds in 1967. An American pre-med student, Vincent Van Patten (God forbid you should ever see him coming at you with a scalpel; goes to McGill University and falls in love with a young Quebecoise woman, Claire Pimpare. She is a traditional homemaker French Canadian girl with the hot blood of revolution coursing through her veins. One look at her charging about Montreal painting the town with separatist slogans and her world is broadened.

The British Columbia Film Commission, with the hot blood of revolution coursing through her veins. One look at her charging about Montreal painting the town with separatist slogans and her world is broadened.

...
Kalli Paakspuu's

Maypole Carving

During baseball season in the summer of 1980, down in the Harbourfront park at the foot of Bathurst St., a strange object appeared in right field sometime during the month of June. It was the huge trunk of a 700-year-old cedar tree. It had been filled in the flat north near Squamish, B.C., stripped and transported by truck to Toronto. With it came a small mobile office, and a group of people with a purpose as grand, it turned out, as the piece of wood itself. They were going to carve something: a Cosmic Maypole! Great! We re-aligned our baseball diamond and continued on with our season.

Two years later, one Kalli Paakspuu, filmmaker, arrives at the Canadian Film Makers Distribution Centre with a 23-minute documentary describing the evolution of this Cosmic Maypole, from the felling of the chosen tree in the lush B.C. forest to the raising of the finished icon, oiled and swirled with carved images, on a chilly October morning in an empty park in Toronto.

The film begins with a series of long, held close-ups showing a carver’s hands, wielding mallet and chisel, slowly fashioning the details of a face in the wood. Timothy Sullivan’s music complements perfectly to immerse the viewer in what is to be the essential idea of the film: slow, patient, painstaking work, performed not as drudgery, but as a way of contemplation and learning – and therefore, creating.

During the established sequences, as we see the felling of the tree and its eventual placement at Toronto’s Harbourfront, there is a voice-over in which designer Georganna Mallof explains the motifs and the story which the carving will depict. She has mapped the whole thing out for the carvers in red and black paint. It is to be used as a design for the “The Dreamwork of the Whales.” The maypole’s various sections will provide a telling of creation’s beginnings. Through these images, we gain a heightened awareness which will necessarily entail Scoring (continued)

big screen. The obviously miscast Jack Wetherall looks as if he had more fun doing The Elephant Man. That leaves us with those cinematic luminaries, Cloris Leachman and Eddie Albert who are, supposedly, our bargain-basement rite of passage. As such, they carriet within them a rather preposterous but crazier things have come up against these fundamentally different views of native peoples in contemporary Canada. Most successful is Treaty & Country, a film by Vancouver documentarians Anne Cubitt and Hugh Brady. The first half of the film is a synch sound sequence of a caribou hunt on a western reserve. As the hunt slowly unfolds, what is to see the film as yet another “Indians trap and skin something” ethnocentric epic. Yet we are soon made aware of the ways that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten that their native protagonists bad gotten