

IN SPRING A YOUNG MAN'S FANCY

by David Beard, Proprietor, Cinebooks

In Spring a young man's fancy turns to what he has been longing to do all winter—make films. With an abundance of light, opportunity, inspiring subjects to photograph and a book to guide, he will be well equipped to make his fancy a reality. And, of course, the publishers and writers who do their making in the winter, see the fruits of their labour in Spring. A little sorting is necessary to separate the artificially fertilized prune from the organically grown peach. Vive la difference!

Low Budget Features, by William Brown, (vellum-bound \$20.00) is aimed at the productive pocketbook. Brown presents an experienced, wise and tough financial system for production. He has made his own successful low-budget feature. In doing so, he learned the 'secrets' of Hollywood production costs. These he passes on in his book. Each chapter is clear and concise.

Example: Film Format—Typical low budget 10,000' Picture. Raw stock, develop originals, 1 litre color w/p, cut original opticals, opaque leader, 16mm first trial, blow-up to 35mm, answer print. Cost is compared for 35mm standard, 35mm Techniscope and 16mm blow-up.

Brown comments on the advantages and disadvantages of the various choices and alternatives. Formats of legal documents, production, script and shooting schedules are set out in minute detail, and discussed fully. It is possible to reproduce these and adapt them to the Canadian filmmaker's requirements.

A craft dictionary and a source directory is appended. These save time in research and money in locating sources of materials. Brown has made little attempt to package his books. Its sole asset is the contents—for this it is invaluable to the man who is undertaking his first film. It is the sort of information that can stop you waving an artistic arm and start writing film-producing cheques. After reading it you can decide if you belong in the dream factory or in the personally rewarding field of low-budget features.

Between the austere format of the **Low Budget Feature** to the well-packaged, **A primer for Film-Making**: A complete Guide to 16mm and 35mm Film Production, by Kenneth H. Roberts & Win Sharples Jr. Paper \$8.00; H.B. \$18.00, and, **Handbook of Film Production**: Encyclopedic coverage of every phase of film-making, including, etc., etc., by John Quick and Tom La Bau H.B. \$12.75, there is quite a gulf.

The Primer is an obvious choice for a text in a film course. The Handbook might have stood a chance if the Primer had not been so well researched for the student market. The Primer is designed for the colleges; whereas, the Handbook seems to have been designed for the library shelf. The publisher of the Handbook did not seem to know that the film book bandwagon has passed. There is more competition now for the student and the filmmaker's dollar and what we were grateful for in film books a few years ago simply doesn't stand a chance now. (Vive la difference!)

The Primer can be more of a tool; whereas, the Handbook has a sort of cookbook feeling—more fun in the living room than in the kitchen. Each book covers familiar topics but the Primer gives more information and is an in-depth study. Each has a wide margin beside the text—the Primer at 3½ inches, the

Handbook at 2¼ inches. The Primer has many more pictures but the Handbook gives a better, closer view of the hardware. The reader is advised to look into the merits of each book (I have only written of the superficial differences in these two books). Suffice to say that the Primer is undoubtedly the best book ever published within its stated purpose.

Somewhere in between all this is **Independent Filmmaking: A Complete Guide to 8mm, Super 8, Single 8 and 16mm Moviemaking**, by Lenny Lipton (vellum cover) \$6.50. Lipton is a writer on film—The Berkeley Barb, filmmaker and teacher. Being in between and independent is the **status quo** of the creative filmmaker.

It is not now fatuous to say that there is no book that meets the needs of the 8mm and Super 8 filmmaker. In 431 pages of no-margin-no-nonsense text, Lipton delivers his comprehensive research and experience in this field. He discusses rather than merely informs. He addresses his work to the man who is interested in developing a style of filmmaking on his own.

A Primer for Filmmaking will certainly gain a wide audience, but **Independent Filmmaking** will start a cult. Like **Low-Budget Features** it cuts out the crap of merchandising information, and places a solid tool in the filmmaker's hand. The value of any technical book lies in the individual's growing ability to use it in mastering his craft. This allows him a greater range of creative expression.

So, if this Spring your fancy turns to either lovemaking or filmmaking, a little bit of technique will make a big difference. If you want a primer, a handbook, a low budget or something independent for either pastime, look over the merchandise and make sure you get some solid content not just the packaging. Remember—Vive la difference!

RECENT RELEASES

D. W. Griffith: His Life and Work, Henderson, Robert M. <i>An in depth biography</i> pp 326 Ill., filmography, index, etc.	\$12.25
Handbook of Film Production, Quick, John & La Bau, Tom (see review) pp 304 Ill.	\$12.95
Hollywood Voices, Sarris, Andrew <i>Natives: Cokor, Mamoulian, Preminger</i> <i>Fugitives: Huston, Losey, N. Ray, Polonsky, Wells</i> pp 180 Ill.	\$ 9.00
Jean Renoir, Braudy, Leo <i>The World of His Films</i> Filmography, Index, etc., pp 286 Ill.	\$10.25
Low Budget Features, Brown, William O. (see review) pp 231 Ill. Vellum	\$20.00
Second Sight, Schickel, Richard <i>Notes on Some Movies 1965-1970</i> Film Reviews pp 351	\$10.75

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