

INTRODUCING...

Stephen Miller *the movie man*

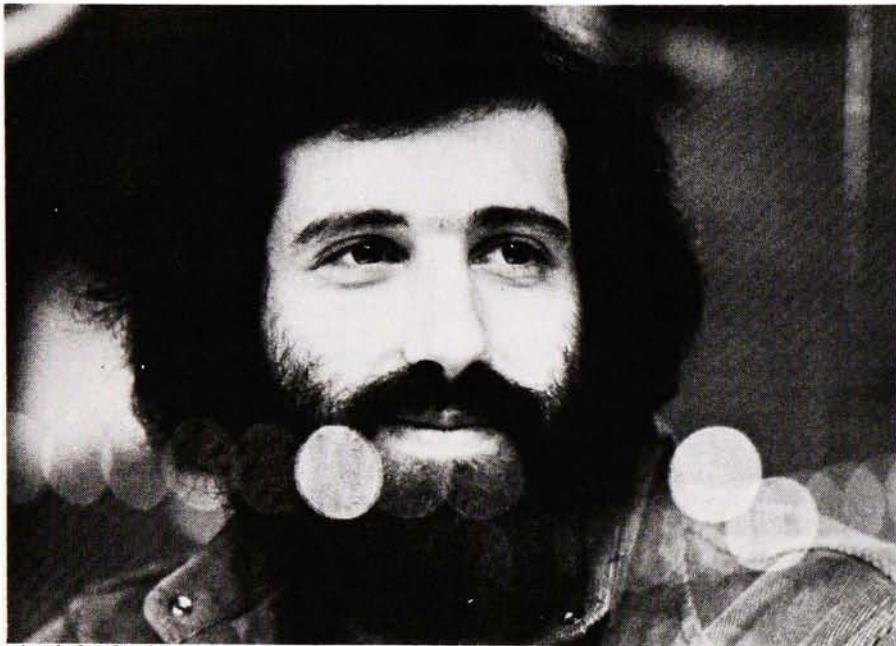


photo by Lois Siegel

At one point in his life, Stephen Miller only saw two films a year. Now he often sees two films a day.

Stephen is the director of the Seville Festival, a relatively new repertory theatre on Ste. Catherine Street West in Montreal, which projects two or three different films every day, including midnight showings on Friday and Saturday.

Films range from 1st run (e.g. Wertmuller's **Love and Anarchy**, Ophuls **Memory and Justice** to 2nd run features (e.g. Woody Allen's **Bananas**, Truffaut's **Jules et Jim**.)

At graduate school in Rochester, N.Y., Stephen found all his courses boring. He began looking for something extra to do. Then a friend asked him to run a film series as part of the school's social events, and that's when Stephen became enthusiastic about film. Along with the film series he also organized an Amateur Film Festival with cash prizes and a dance marathon around **They Shoot Horses Don't They**.

After his school days, Stephen returned to Montreal to become an analyst for an investment firm. That also

was boring, so logically the next step was to look for a theatre.

In April, 1975 Stephen negotiated for Cinema V.

On May 1st he left the investment house.

On May 6th he was in Cannes for the festival.

On August 1st he opened the Cinema V.

Because of business complications with the owner of the Cinema V building, Stephen left that theatre July 31, 1976 and secured the Seville where he would have total creative control.

Besides showing a wide variety of films every week, the Seville is unique with its series of "Encounters", whereby local filmmakers present their films in person to the audience.

Filmmakers who have participated in these sessions include: Ron Hallis, Michael Rubbo, Jean-Claude Labreque, and Tom Burstyn, whose film about the sculptor Mark Prent, "**If Brains Were Dynamite You Wouldn't Have Enough to Blow Your Nose**," won a Gold Medal at the Chicago International Film Festival. Mark Prent even brought his large, encased, rather grotesque sculpture "Dynamite

Brains," to the theatre the night of the showing.

Stephen also likes to recruit 16mm shorts by independent filmmakers to show before the features. "Hopefully, in time, we will be able to pay local filmmakers for these screenings," he asserts. Right now he offers these filmmakers passes to the theatre in exchange.

The Seville Theatre's special events have included a Rocky Horror Halloween Look-Alike Contest; a six-week Dance Series, A Shakespeare Series, and a free screening of Cocteau's **Orphée**.

"The most difficult aspect of repertory is programming, Stephen explains. One needs a balance. The mood of the season affects the audience as well as the locations; for example, in New York there are different types of audiences. There is always someone who will go to see almost anything, but in Montreal a first run, unknown film receives no business. The amount of new films you can introduce to a Montreal audience is limited, and the New York variety of audience just doesn't exist here."

But he hopes that eventually his audience will become more trusting and be willing to investigate the lesser known European, independent and local films. For instance, the Seville recently opened the English version of **Jonah Who Will Be 25 in the Year 2000** by Swiss filmmaker Alain Tanner.

Always one jump ahead, Stephen books films 7-10 weeks in advance. He has to keep in tune with his audience.

Stephen Miller finds repertory theatres necessary. "It bothers me to pay \$3.75 - \$4 to see a movie. The Seville charges only \$1.99 a film, or offers a subscription card of 5 films for \$7.50. Golden Agers and children under 10 enter for \$.99.

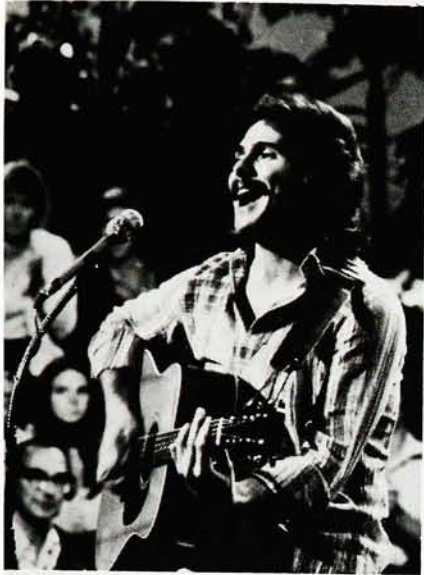
"Also, we run a lot of films not showing in the city. If a film does not do well on a first run, it will never be re-run in regular theatres, regardless of whether it's a good film or not. I try to discover these films and old films to show in my theatre."

"I eat celluloid for breakfast," extols Stephen.

Lois Siegel

Kevin Gillis

Ottawa soundtracks



Kevin Gillis lives and works composing music in an old stone convent in a small town – population, about 1300 – some 40 miles from Ottawa. It *used* to be a convent, that is. Now it's a recording studio, an audio-visual set-up complete with gingerbread trim on the outside and a Yamaha grand piano on the inside. Kevin Gillis likes to do things that way. It's what's known as down-to-earth panache.

He is twenty-seven now and the oldest of a family of seven kids. He grew up in Ottawa and a few places in Europe, including Luxembourg. He has travelled and performed with Kris Kristofferson, Mary Travers and Tom Rush, and at one time trekked across Canada with a Canada Council grant to interview harmonica players, a project which was subsequently heard on CBC radio and may possibly become a book.

Kevin Gillis is no ordinary fellow.

"I'm very persnickety about what I do," he says. His reputation can back him up. He loves to tell the story about the time a client gave him a 30-minute slash print on a Friday and they recorded the final tracks for part of the film on the following Monday. Gillis works best when the heat's on.

What does he think about the film industry in Canada?

"One of the saddest things about Canadian filmmaking is that so many

people take the easy way out and go with stock music. It happens all the time."

What about writing theme music?

"It's got to capture the feeling of the film and get you interested."

A score?

"It has to be tied in to what the director is trying to achieve. It can't overpower the visuals. Its job is to underline what the director is doing. Music has its own way of drawing emotions out of people." Gillis should

know. His work includes the music for CJOH-TV's "Joys of Collecting," CTV's "The Diefenbaker Years," CBC's "Celebrity Cooks" and CBC Radio's "This Country in the Morning." He has also recently completed two 30-minute travel programmes in the upcoming "The World of Vincent Price" series. Gillis' next stop?

"I'd like to do a feature. An original soundtrack."

Brian Jeffrey Street

Arthur Lipsett

a close encounter of the fifth kind

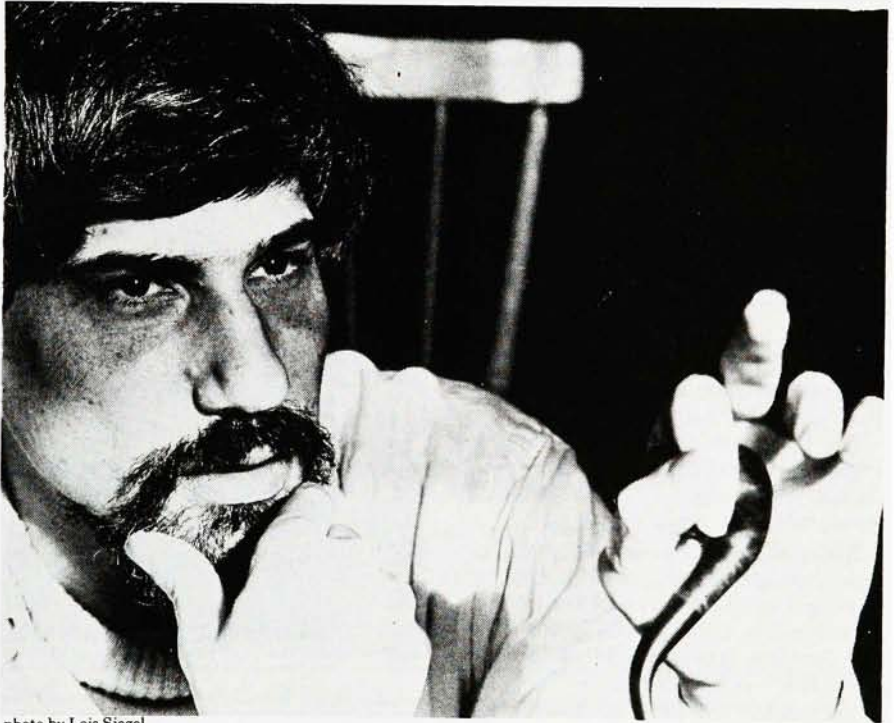


photo by Lois Siegel

It is not easy to interview Arthur Lipsett, because after a brief encounter with him it becomes obvious that he has rejected the standard, ready-made, machine-oriented, artificial way of life upon which most people pattern and pride themselves.

Arthur has come a long way and has seen and experienced some situations and ideas rather obscure to the masses.

His particular investigation seems to be *What is Life*.

Whether one is mainly concerned with his films or with the man, Ar-

thur's ideas are inseparable from the way he experiences the world.

The films he made while working at The National Film Board of Canada include the following: **Very Nice, Very Nice**, which received an Oscar nomination; **Fluxes; Free Fall; N-Zone; Trip Down Memory Lane** and **21-87**.

As if impersonating Rip Van Winkle himself, Arthur has emerged from a seven-year repose to once again examine people and what they are trying to be and who they might be.

His films consist of different bits of stock footage and photographs he took

INTRODUCING ...

himself, compiled in a form of collage with fragments of sound which present a new perspective on the activities of everyday life.

In his film, **Very Nice, Very Nice**, Arthur seems to question certain aspects of human life. We see clowns and football players, Kellogg's cornflake products and hundreds of people marching with a gigantic flag stretching across the expanse of a street in a parade, a Ku Klux Klanner, a chart illustrating the inside of a brain and a cake in the shape of a rabbit.

Why do people participate in all these activities? Is there a cohesion and a purpose? "There's so many ways of living lives," Arthur stresses.

We see a bomb exploding, a movie theatre audience wearing 3D glasses, a skull on the end of a stick... and eventually we hear a voice...

"I don't think there's a deep concern about anything... People forget what happened on Tuesday... A politician can promise them anything, and they will not remember what they have been promised."

"Why do we do all this..."

And then we see a crowded cityscape, traffic and a pile of worn out US Air Force jet fighters stacked to the sky. "And the situation seems to be getting worse."

It all relates to "Holding time together," Arthur explains. The viewer is forced to reconsider what he sees, hears or thinks he understands.

The final commentary one hears is a kind of chant of automatic praise emitted by a man... "Uhhmmmm, bravo, very nice, very nice."

When one is 40 years old and has gone through the processes of film, of investigating the interior of the media, then what is there left to do? Either you continue the struggle of investigating life - or you go crazy.

If a person has been in hibernation for awhile, he might not feel nervous about the imaginative side of filmmaking, but he might feel a little uneasy when he faces someone who has kept up with the practical aspects.

And now...

"I have no choice anymore. I do accept the way things are pretty much. The system is very tight - quite locked up. I don't think that much can be done. It's difficult for an artist to infiltrate into the government to do something."

"I went to the National Film Board quite by accident from art school to fill an opening in the Animation De-

partment. At the Board I experienced a great deal of opposition because there was very little work being done of the type I was doing. My work was in between - neither underground nor conventional. I always had a lot of pressure on me. It was difficult just to get the money to continue. There was always the question of the kind of film I wanted to make next."

Arthur is presently waiting for a decision from the Film Board concerning a series of five films for children.

"Because I'm not making a film right now, I'm terribly bored."

But in the meantime, Arthur is working with notebooks filled with ideas. He carries them with him and is constantly stopping to jot something down or to draw a sketch; for example, "What did the tomato say to the carrot." And in the context of a children's film, what could be more imaginative than perhaps to create a new possibility of language or communication.

Lois Siegel

Linda Beath distribution dynamo

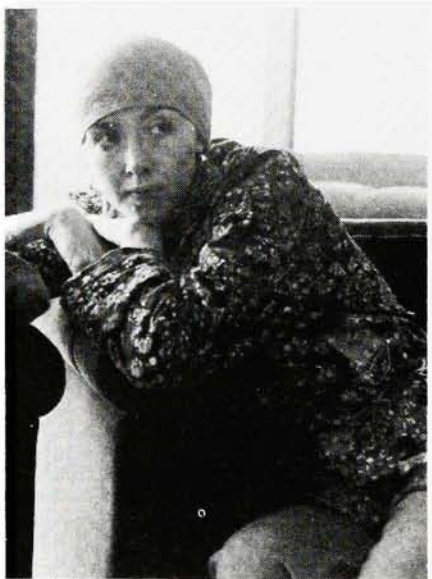


photo by Gunter Ott

Linda Beath has not always been the most popular distributor in town. Back in 1974, when she took over the management of New Cinema in Toronto, the company had just produced **Cannibal Girls**, gone through bankruptcy and been sold to a group of neophyte investors, none of whom planned to work in the company. Linda was young, smoked cigars and said what was on her mind.

People in the industry wondered where she came from and where she thought she was going.

Where she came from was the Canadian Film Institute. There she had set up the annual publication of *Film Canadiana* and took care of the film

periodical library. She had a B.Sc. in chemistry and math in her pocket but it didn't much matter.

Where she thought she was going wasn't clear then, even to her. At New Cinema she got the files in order, worked 6 months on the Women's Film Festival and took off for a 5-month vacation in England. She saw 12 movies a week that summer while she worked researching a catalogue at the British Film Institute. She also got seriously bitten by the movie bug.

Back in Toronto and at New Cinema, Linda heard that the Janus Film Library was up for grabs and decided to get it. And get it she did. It was easy. That was the start of her aggressive approach to acquisition and distribution.

But the rest wasn't easy. The public institutions were leary and so were some theatre owners. For New Cinema, **Bergman's Scenes From A Marriage** was the 'break-through' film. (When no commercial house would take **Scenes in Regina**, she booked it into the Public Library with great success.) Don Rugoff from New York admired her spunk in distribution and the word began to travel that Canada had a hot young distributor who cared about quality films and would give them her all.

Linda picked up **Cousin Cousine** and **Les Ordres**. This year, it's **Outrageous** and **J.A. Martin photographe**. The Janus Library has its steady clients, and the tide has turned in New Cinema's favor.

Linda took on the job last fall of co-ordinating the programming for Toronto's Festival of Festivals. She kept her calm, battled films through the censor, coped with the myriad things which can go wrong at an event of that size and was available to everyone throughout the ten non-stop days.

As if all of that weren't enough, she and Bob Huber have just taken over the operation of the Capitol Fine Arts theatre in Toronto from Famous Players. Beath can at long last provide Toronto audiences with an exclusive first-run art house to screen foreign features. (The Fine Arts screens Fassbinder!)

"I like the sense of reality in distribution," she says. What she means is that, if she does a good job, she gets more films. The equation is elementary and appeals to her.

It's been a while since people didn't take Linda seriously. And although she's pushing thirty, she has already pushed herself to the top in the minds of those who count on her to provide quality in the films she distributes.

Connie Tadros



CINE

AUDIO LTD.

Main lab:
10251-106 St.
Edmonton T5J 1H5
ph. (403) 423-5081

1027-6th Ave. S.W.
Calgary T2P 0W1
(403) 266-3310

- Color Neg. II (7247)
& Pos. (7383)
- 7239/40, 7252, 7242/41/56
- B & W Neg/Pos
- Complete Post-Production Services
- Editing Facilities,
featuring
- Clean Air Neg Cutting Room
- Equipment Rentals

**OPEN
SATURDAYS**

STEENBECK EDITING ROOMS
16mm & 35mm

- TRANSFERS **\$15/hr** +stock
- SYNC-UP DAILIES
- INTERLOCK SCREENING
- NEG CUTTING
- SOUND EFFECTS
- MUSIC LIBRARY
- NARRATION RECORDING
- MIXING
with George Novotny

AT A REASONABLE COST

The Mixing House

43 BRITAIN STREET
TORONTO, ONTARIO M5A 1R7
TELEPHONE 416 361-1437

**FILM
INSURANCE**

Do you have the proper coverage?

To be sure, consult a specialist.

Films-TV-Theatre

**MICHAEL DEVINE
& ASSOCIATES LTD.**

2360 Lucerne
Montreal, Quebec
H3C 2K2

**Take advantage of us
Subscribe today!**

cinema canada

Ten issues of *Cinema Canada* including *Trade News North*

Canada \$10. Foreign \$12. Institution or company \$15.

Write soon with your check to: **Cinema Canada, Box 398,
Outremont Station, Montreal, Quebec, H2V 4N3**

**DO YOUR EDITOR A FAVOR
CUT YOUR NEXT FILM AT
CINEMA
PRODUCTIONS**

THREE GREAT STEENBECK EDITING ROOMS

100 Richmond St.E., Suite 207, Toronto M5C 1P4

Tel: 362-7530/362-4553