

## 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

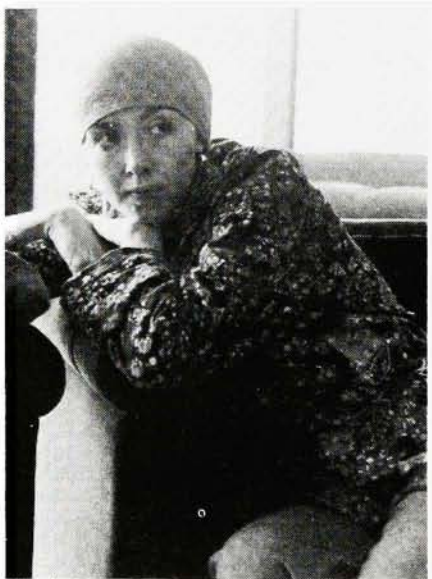


photo by Gunter Ott

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



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