

After all the slammers, Burke concluded that he is actually very optimistic. As he puts it, we are now in phase II of the feature film industry in Canada. In phase I, you were a miracle worker if you could make a feature film in Canada. In Phase II, you had to pretend Canada didn't exist. Every film had to be commercial. What used to be called the 'passion pit film' was our penchant. And now we're in phase III, after **Duddy Kravitz** and **Lies My Father Told Me**, we have proved we can make successful commercial films in Canada. We don't even mind if the world knows they are set in Canada.

I asked Martyn Burke to fantasize for a moment about ten years from now. Where would he like to be. He looked away and closed his eyes. And then he answered, "Right here. In Toronto. In the middle of a thriving film industry."

**Coup d'Etat** is a film written and directed by Martyn Burke. I look forward to seeing it.

Kenneth Dancyger

# albert kish

## the son of mrs. kish

Albert Kish is a Hungarian filmmaker who, if you put a motorcycle helmet on him, looks like a cross between the poet Solzhenitsyn and a Russian astronaut.

He recently won seven international awards for his film **Los Canadienses**, a thoroughly researched study of Canadian participation in the Spanish Civil War.

Albert makes personalized films about events and situations he considers important. This is a **Photograph** portrays immigrants as striving and vital people in a developing Canada.

Albert does not laugh at the immigrants but shows their clumsiness during their first five years of assimilation. The immigrants are forced to learn a new language and culture, but Albert does not find their lives tragic; instead, he calls their attitude a type of "gal-lows humor".



Albert Kish

Photo: Lois Seigel

Albert reminisces, "On my first date with an English girl here in Canada I bought dog biscuits as a present because I couldn't read the labels." He reveals the humorous human predicaments which befall us all: One immigrant becomes homesick one night and calls his parents in Greece. "It's easy to pick up the phone in America." His phone bill is \$200. The next day he disappears.

A new film, **Hold the Ketchup**, considers the food people eat and focuses on Canadians who were born in other countries but who have retained certain culinary traditions.

The film avoids official commentary and instead concentrates on people making preparations which look simple so that the viewer might try the same recipes.

Albert, who was born in Eger, Hungary in 1937, first became interested in film when a movie company came to his home town. "They brought cranes, dollies, lights, actors," Albert explains. He was 15 and forgot to go to school. Albert watched the filming. "It was magic." The third day his mother came, the fourth day his teacher came, the fifth day the principal... they found Albert still watching.

Then the policeman came... but Albert didn't care. And the cameraman noticed him and let him look in the

camera. And he's been hooked on film ever since.

After high school Albert attended the Academy of Stage and Film in Budapest, the one founded by Béla Belazs. Then the revolution broke out in 1956, and he came to Canada. Albert apprenticed as a camera assistant and then freelanced as a cameraman shooting industrial shorts.

In 1964 the CBC had an opening for a film editor. Albert told the supervisor "I can edit." He became an editor. "That was my film school. I learned to think very quickly because I worked under enormous pressure. They teach you discipline. I learned editing by watching rushes and tried to connect everything. As a result I became very sensitive to the smallest detail."

During the Expo year the Canadian National Railroad film unit hired Albert. He photographed trains left to right, right to left, low angle/high angle, high angle/low angle. After this enlightening experience John Howe chanced to call the National Film Board. "What are you up to," he curiously inquired. "I'll take it." leaped Albert. Within one half of an hour Albert was an NFB film editor. And the son of Mrs. Kish has been with the film board ever since.

Lois Seigel

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