

by Charlotte Hussey



Mario Iaizzo assists camera operator, Jim Scott with the filming of *Go Cart*, a Conestoga College student film

photo: Rose Janovich

the inside story

ALGONQUIN

At Algonquin College of Applied Arts and Technology, the Film Production Program puts emphasis on courses that are "practically oriented." This program strives to balance theoretical and practical courses; thirty to fifty percent of the "courses contain either theory or" are "courses of a general, educational nature." Also two courses are "offered by other departments" to students in the film program.

Prospective Algonquin College students are given a departmental calendar that lists course descriptions, but not the faculty's background. Course objectives for each year of study are as follows: during the first year, the aim is "to get acquainted with basic film

Charlotte Hussey works as an assistant to the editor at Cinema Canada in Montreal.

professions and genres" such as "documentary, animation, news, sponsored" films and to study "theory" and do "practical exercises." Second year students participate in "at least two films" and study a "combination of theory and practical production." In the third year, students are "only" involved with the production of sponsored "films for . . . community groups" and for "other departments of the college."

Outside of the classroom, additional stimulation comes from "at least four hours per semester" of individual consultation, adding up to between "8 - 12 sessions" with a professor, and from the opportunities students have to develop contacts with professionals working at "three well-known production companies in Ottawa," at the National Film Board, and in Montreal, "two hours away."

The most important technical facil-

ities offered at Algonquin are "six sync sound cameras (BL, Eclair, CP), ten other 16mm cameras, seven Nagras with complete microphone kits, two Steenbecks, two Moviolas, three table top Moviolas, a sound studio and a mixing and transfer studio." The program employs its "own technologist" who makes "complex repairs . . . whenever equipment is not functioning."

As for the use of production equipment, first year students may expect to work with "16mm Beaulieu plus Nagras plus complete editing setups with synchronizers and rewinds," while second and third year students will use "six sync sound cameras, Nagras, etc." and "two Steenbecks" and "two Moviolas." The crews assigned to each of the six to eight student films produced annually vary in size from four to ten students.

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In conclusion, Algonquin mentions five of its recent graduates with high achievement: Peter Wintonick '74 who was *In Praise of Older Women's* feature film editor; Ian McBride '74 who has worked as an assistant editor on twelve feature films including *Murder By Decree*; Gerald Tripp '78 who is a producer/director at Atkinson Film in Ottawa; Dennis Lauriault '78 who works for Global TV News; and Marc Tardiff '76 who is a free-lance cameraman for the National Film Board.

Some of the best films produced by its students are two films by Harriet Pa-caud, her "superb documentary" *Bank Street and Live and Learn*, "many prints" of which have been "sold by the Canadian Film Maker's Distribution Centre; Sam Firestone's *Slaughterhouse* which won the Grand Prix at the Canadian National Exhibition Festival and his *10:08*, a Canadian Film Awards nominee; and Alan Hansen and Lorne Bergstrom's *94 James Street*, an "excellent documentary about children in a day care centre."

The main advantages of Algonquin College's Film Production Program are according to the respondent, its "emphasis on technician training plus a chance for creative expression, a solid education in documentaries, sponsored films and short dramatic films, specialization according to the existing film professions, extensive personal contact between students and teachers, and intensive student involvement in a variety of practical projects."

CARLTON

"No practical courses" are offered by Carleton University's Film Studies Committee, but its interdisciplinary aim is to balance the largely theoretical curriculum with "courses related to other departments." A departmental calendar can be obtained that lists faculty background and course descriptions. Studies are organized around the following objectives: first year courses offer a "general knowledge of specific problems"; the second year is dedicated to "broadening this knowledge"; and the third focuses on "specific knowledge of specific problems."

Although the Carleton respondent says that there are few opportunities for his students to develop contacts with the professional film industry, he states that students receive at least "three" hours of individual consultation per semester. He goes on to list Carleton's

most important technical facilities, which are inspected and serviced "annually," as "one 2-plate 16mm Steenbeck, one 2-plate 16/35mm Interacine, and three analytical projectors."

What happens, then, to Carleton Film Studies grads? Will Straw '78 has gone on to do an M.A. at McGill, John Harkness '78 is doing an MFA at Columbia, and Yvette Hackett '78 is an assistant director at the National Film Theatre in Ottawa. They are among recent Carleton graduates of high achievement.

The Carleton Film Studies Committee writes that "it is, perhaps, a weakness of your (Cinema Canada's) survey that it should be directed to production schools" and goes on to conclude that the main advantages of its department are its "emphasis on the social importance of film, historically, theoretically, and critically."

CONCORDIA

At Concordia University's Faculty of Fine Arts, Cinema Section of Visual Arts, students can take a B.F.A. major in cinema with a concentration in production or in film studies and a B.F.A. minor in animation. The objective for each year of study was not given for the film studies option, but for "the production concentration," the objective in the first year is an "introduction to the use of "super-8 film," in the second year is an "introduction to 16mm sync," while in the third year, there is "advanced" study. "A typical major in film concentration in production has a minimum of 24 courses in other departments, probably four or more production courses (the minimum is three), and probably four film studies courses (the minimum is two)." A departmental calendar describing the curriculum and the faculty's background is given free-of-charge to prospective students.

The Concordia respondent says that it is "impossible to say an average," when asked how many hours of individual consultation a student receives per semester. He states that "individual production students in advanced courses can, if they have the need and initiative, receive as much as twenty or more (hours)! In the introductory courses, students lacking in interest could get away with practically none!"

In addition to the possibilities for extensive personal contact between teachers and those more highly motivated students, Concordia's Cinema Sec-

tion, located in the filmmaking center of Montreal, regularly has visiting speakers who are independent filmmakers or are professionals working at the NFB or in private industry. Also "a professional internship" worth 6 academic credits is open to second year, film production students who have "been employed within the film industry for not less than 500 hours within the same calendar year" or for cinema studies students who have "been employed for the same amount of time in research, archival work, editing a film publication or in writing film criticism."

The most important technical facilities at Concordia are listed as "five sync-sound units, three Steenbecks, an Oxberry animation stand and numerous super-8 and non-sync 16mm units." While for film studies, there are "several analytic projectors, one 2-plate Steenbeck and access to video equipment" first year students have access primarily to the super-8 equipment and to "some sync sound super-8 and non-sync 16mm" equipment, while second and third year students work with 16mm sync. "Two full-time technicians" inspect and service all technical facilities "regularly."

Answering the question about student production costs and lab fees, the Concordia respondent writes that "there are production grants intended to offset some of the production costs for selected projects, but students must finance the bulk of their productions. The lab fee varies from \$100 in super-8 to more than \$1000 in a few of the large 16mm productions. By lab fee, I mean the student's contribution to his/her production." The size of the crews assigned to these productions can vary "from one to fifteen."

Some achievements of recent graduates are as follows: George Archambault is the film professor in the CEGEP Ahuntsic who organized the first Montreal Super-8 Film Festival in May, 1978; Peter Adamakos is President of Disada Productions; Craig Cottle (still a student) received a grant from the Institute Québécois du Cinéma for script development; films by Mike Riggio, Roger Cantin, Tom Berry and Franco Battista were included in the 1978 Festival of Independent Film organized by the University of Quebec in Montreal; and G. Archambault's *L'enterrement d'Arsène*, F. Battista's *Le poulailler des temps perdu* and G. Laniel's *Sans titre* were selected for screening in "La Semaine du Cinéma Québécois, 1977."

The main advantages, then, of Concordia University's Cinema Section were summed up as its "downtown Mont-

real" location and its "fine arts context (as opposed to technical schools or communication departments, etc.)." And the main disadvantage of this film education survey was that "not enough room" was provided "on the questionnaire."

CONESTOGA

A "practical, 'hands-on' application of theoretical courses" is the approach at Conestoga College of Applied Arts and Technology's Film Production Program which seeks to "reinforce theory" with practice. Film students are required to take "one humanities elective... each year," unless they already have "three university credits."

Students and prospective students are given a handbook containing "detailed course outlines" and descriptions of faculty background upon request. The following are the objectives for this "CAAT Diploma Program": the first year consists of an "intensive exploration of sequence construction from silence to sound" and of learning "supportive technical information"; the second continues the above "exploration" and goes on to introduce "color theory and complete film production"; the third year is devoted to a "thesis in film production" and "on the job training."

"As required" was the answer given by the Conestoga College respondent when asked how many hours of individual consultation a student receives per semester. He did qualify this answer by adding that "considerably more" individual consulting occurs "in the second semester of each year," than during the first. In addition to meeting individually with professors, Conestoga film students maintain "close contact... with the industry" located in Toronto, 60 miles away.

A "film studio, multi-track State-of-the Art mixing and transfer facility, six bench editing facilities, three Steenbeck rooms, two Oxberry 16mm cameras/animation" and "excellent 16mm camera and lighting equipment" are Conestoga College's most important technical facilities and they are inspected and serviced "continually."

Students are required to pay "a \$110 lab fee" and a "refundable, \$75 damage deposit," and can expect to use "super-8 cameras and projectors, Arriflex 16mm equipment, bench editing facilities in 16mm and Nagra tape recorders" during the first year. Second year students use "Eclair NPR, CP-16, Arriflex, Nagra, Steenbeck tables, location light-

ing and Locam cameras." All the above "as well as other rented equipment" is used "as needed" by third year students who also work with an "Arriflex 35 IIC." Usually "small crews" are assigned to student films, but this can vary depending "on the requirements of the script."

Five recent Conestoga grads have gone on to achieve the following: Barry Greenwald '74 won the Palm D'Or at the International Film Festival at Cannes for *Metamorphosis*; Roland Pirkler '74 works for the Museum of Natural History in Ottawa; Bruce Allen works for Cross Roads Communications Inc.; Peter Starr is employed by the National Film Board of Canada; and Scott Barrie won Best Director and the Norman McLaren Award at the 1978 Canadian Student Film Festival for *Gracie*, one of the best films produced by a Conestoga student. Also the Chicago Film Festival's certificate of merit was awarded for *Gracie* and for Bob Williams's *One Fine Day*. The latter was screened at the Ca-



Conestoga student Wayne Lawley filming *Clean Up or Else* for the Kitchener Fire Department

nadian National Exhibition Festival as was Denis Austin's *Return of the Swans*.

The main advantages, then, as seen by Conestoga College's Film Production Program are its job-oriented, practical, "hands-on" production emphasis," the fact that "close cooperation with the industry" is possible, and finally that the "work of assistant cameraman, editor and soundman" as well as the formats for film and TV are "thoroughly taught."

QUEEN'S

An "integrated program stressing the aesthetic, structural and political contexts in which filmmaking occurs" is taught at Queen's University's Department of Film Studies. The first year curriculum serves as a "general introduction" to film studies. A "foundation" in "film criticism, history and pro-

duction" is acquired in the second year. An "in-depth" concentration in "area studies," such as "Canadian cinema, Hollywood, documentaries, etc." is given to third year students. "Seminars in areas of special interest" are offered during the fourth year. Specific descriptions of course offerings and faculty background can be found in the Queen's University, Department of Film Studies' calendar.

Located "in the heart of Kingston," this film studies department plays host to "many visiting filmmakers" and offers anywhere from "10 to 30 hours" per semester of individual consultation between student and faculty members, although this is "open to student initiative."

The Following Technical set-up is available: "complete super-8 facilities, comprehensive 16mm facilities, Steenbeck, CP 16, Nagra, Moviola, etc. and video facilities." Students work with both "super-8 and 16mm" for the remaining three years. Equipment is "routinely" checked and is located in production studios and classrooms that are "spread-out" over the campus, although "planned consolidation" should occur "in a few years." Student production costs vary, as do the size of film crews. The lab fee remains at \$50. Recent Queen's film studies achievers are Sandra Bernstein '76 who works as a New Cinema distributor; Mike MacMillan, Andrew Riddick, Jan Platt and Seaton MacLean, all 1978 grads and the co-founders of Atlantis Films Company, which specializes in documentary filmmaking. Three of the best films produced by Queen's students are M. MacMillan's *If You Love Me, Look at Me* which was purchased by the National Film Board, D. Redmond's *The Box and I*, an NFB purchase that is used "by rehabilitation medicine departments across Canada," and C. Whynot's *Sheila* which was screened at the Student Film Festival at Banff.

Finally, according to the respondent, the main advantage of the Queen's Film Studies Department is that it offers its students a chance to obtain "high quality critical studies in the context of an integrated program" from professors that "probably have the strongest publishing and scholarship record of any Canadian film faculty."

U.B.C.

The objective "for all (3) years" of study at the University of British Columbia, Film/Television Studies Pro-

gramme, Department of Theatre is "to increase film/television critical faculties and sophistication in production." A departmental calendar can be obtained that lists faculty background and course descriptions of this film program which offers "a balance between theoretical and practical" courses.

The U.B.C. respondent writes that there are "unlimited" amounts of time available during a semester for individual consultation between professor and student and answered "yes" when asked if U.B.C. film students do develop contacts with the professionals working in the film centre of Vancouver.

"We are fully equipped to do everything except processing" is the answer to the query about available technical facilities at the University of British Columbia, where a first year student can expect to work in "super-8," a second year student uses "super-8 sound and 16mm (Arri, Eclair, Nagras, Steenbeck and Moviolas)" and third year students have "mixing facilities, Anim crane, Acme cameras, Bolexes, optical printers etc. and 1/2" video rovers" at their disposal. All the above equipment is "constantly" being checked by a "full-time technician." U.B.C. "students pay for raw stock and lab costs," and "six to seven people" make up an average production crew for a student film.

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The U.B.C. respondent chose not to name five recent graduates with the highest achievement or to list three of the best films to be produced by his department because, as he explains, "these are value judgements I would be unwilling to make. Our students have won a number of prizes, domestic and international, and work for the NFB, the CBC and for features shot in Vancouver."

In drawing his conclusions about the University of British Columbia's Film/TV Studies Program, the respondent writes, "I don't know if it is different" from other such programs, "but we are excellently equipped and can select students who have promise" in that only "10 out of 30-80 applicants" are accepted each year.

U. of MAN.

"No practical courses" are offered by the University of Manitoba's Film Studies Program "except for special topics in screenwriting and informal work in video and super-8." The Department offers students and prospective students a departmental calendar listing faculty background and course descriptions. Such course offerings can be generally described as first-year, introductory courses, second-year courses that deal with "broad issues," and third-year courses that deal "in-depth" with "issues, films and filmmakers."

In this film program the average number of hours of individual consultation received by a student during a semester "depends on the course and the professor." Students receive additional stimulation from the school being located close to a filmmaking centre and from opportunities to develop contacts with professionals working nearby.

The University of Manitoba's "rarely" inspected or serviced technical set-

up consists of "ten (or so) abused, super-8 cameras, six Fujica editor/viewers and access to video equipment," used by all students regardless of their level of proficiency. Students must pay lab fees and their own production costs.

"Our major is only one year old," writes the Manitoba Film Studies respondent who, consequently, is not able to answer questions about graduates. He does say that five previous students are in graduate school, while two work "in film-related publishing jobs." John Kozak '77 is presently doing a graduate degree in production at New York University and John Paige's animated film *The Dreamer* enables its director to place as a London-Zagreb finalist.

Although a "budget crunch is hurting the development of production courses" within the University of Manitoba's Film Studies Program, the conclusion is drawn that the main advantages of this department are the "depth and breadth of the program" and its "uniqueness in the West."

U. of W. O.

The University of Western Ontario offers film courses "within its Department of English." English students can concentrate in film studies by taking "four general level courses. Honors students and English majors may write a senior thesis on film." This program does not aim to achieve a balance between theoretical, practical and out-of-departmental courses, for as the Western Ontario respondent writes, "we have no practical courses and no link with courses in other departments." Instead it offers its students "introductory material on a wide variety of films and filmmakers."

Outside of classroom participation, students can expect to receive "two

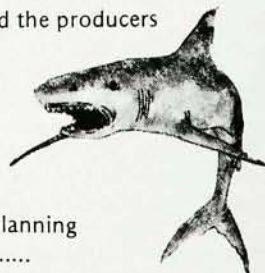
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hours" on an average of individual consultation with members of the faculty during a semester. The opportunities for students to develop contacts with working film professionals are limited. The respondent explains, "Some of our students have worked with the few filmmakers in London, but this is unusual and is not really part of our program."

Also as this program offers a film studies concentration within an English department, it does not put emphasis on production equipment or technical facilities. But "three Pagaert projectors, one Athena projector, a screening room, a film library, a small library of film texts, a VTR and Moviola" are some of the resources available to students. "The Pagaerts and the Athena projectors are serviced as they break down" or routinely "on an average of once a year."

As The University of Western Ontario's film studies concentration was introduced in 1975-76, the respondent was unable to account for many of the graduating students. He did mention that Richard Hudsson '76 is both an artist and instructor at the State University of New York in Buffalo, and David Burr '76 works as a media librarian. Also the respondent writes that "an average of one - two students per year go on to future film studies or work in the industry."

In summing up the main advantages of the University of Western Ontario's film courses, the respondent concludes that they are offered within the context of an "excellent English department," which has a "very good film collection," and that they make possible "a high degree of personal contact with those few film students who wish to go on in film."

YORK

"The only place in Canada that offers a graduate program in either film study or film productions" as well as undergraduate degrees is York University's Film Department. In reading the departmental calendar, with its listing of faculty backgrounds and course descriptions, one can see that this film program attempts to strike a balance between theory and practice. Out of the "twenty courses needed for a B.F.A. degree, eight to twelve can be in film." The "production option" consists of "ten studio and two theory" courses, while the "film studies option" includes eight theory and history courses and one studio course."

The objective for the first year of study is to provide a foundation in "film theory basics and in still photography." The aim of the second year is to teach "basic film production and film history and video screen writing." The third year's concentration is on "professional film techniques, film writing and on film and society video." Fourth year students study such topics as "advanced production, directing and acting, the industry and specialized history and theory."

"Due to the wide differences at each level," writes the York respondent, "an average figure is meaningless" in relation to the number of hours of individual consultation time available to a student during a semester. But he does answer that York is located close to the filmmaking centre of Toronto. And because "over twenty guests," which have included such visitors as "Allan King and Sydney Newman," come to York "yearly," students can develop contact with film professionals. "Reduced" student "rates" are obtained and classes are "suspended for film festivals." Also such working professionals as "Bill Fruet, Doug Leiterman, Stan Colbert, and Garth Drabinsky" have been "part-time teachers" at York.

The film department's most important technical facilities are "professional, standard 16mm Arri's, Nagras, etc., up-to-date video equipment including access to color 2" quad, and sophisticated super-8 sound." There is "full-time maintenance" of this equipment, which is inspected "daily, as it is returned from service." In the first year, a "still photo darkroom" is available to York students. In the second year, they work with "super-8 sync sound television" equipment. In the third and fourth years, "pro 16mm Arri BL's, a Magatech transfer, Nagras, Moviolas, Steenbecks, and mixing and broadcast standard TV studio facilities" are available.

Students can obtain financial assistance such that "most production costs are covered from eighty percent in the second year to seventy percent in the fourth year," but most pay lab fees that "range from \$25 in the first year to about \$100 in the fourth year." Student crews range in size from "two to eight" people with the average at "five key crew members."

"Our graduates seem to have some success in the film world" and "many of our student films have won awards each year," writes the York respondent. Mark Irwin '72 worked as director of photography for *The Brood* and for two other feature films. Ivan Fecan

'74 is an executive producer for City-TV. Ruth Hope '74 is a free-lance director who worked for TV Ontario. Rudy Buttignol '74 is a director/producer. Leila Bassen '74 is an executive assistant to Robert Lantos, while another York grad, James Lahti '76 works as a feature film editor. And the best recent films produced by York grads are Niv Fichman's *Opus 1, No.1* which recently won the Paris Award and was aired on CBC; Tony D'Andrea's *Nomads* placed first at the 1978 Canadian Student Film Festival; James Orr's *Chrysalis* placed first at the Boston International Student Film Fest; and Mario Bolduc's *La nouvelle vendeuse* won the Norman McLaren Award at the 1976 Canadian Student Film Festival.

The main advantages, then, of York University's Film Department, writes the respondent, are that it offers the only Canadian "graduate program in either film study or film production," and that its graduate and undergraduate curriculum is "balanced between the conceptual and the practical within a university fine arts program" that is staffed by "solid, professional teachers."



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