

INTRODUCING...

andré collette

a born
entrepreneur

He used to operate bowling alleys.
Now he operates a film laboratory.

André Collette is president and general manager of Bellevue Pathé, Montréal.

Collette's reputation has grown over the years. When he gives his word, it has credibility and respect in the industry.

When he was young, Collette wanted to be a salesman. First he worked as a hardware clerk, then he graduated to the paint business, then to Brunswick of Canada as national sales manager in the bowling and billiard business.

Finally, as assistant director of Expo's "Man and the City" pavilion, he met Harold Greenberg, current president and chairman of the board of Astral-Bellevue Pathé.

After Expo, Collette became a sales representative on the road for Greenberg. He was selling services for a small company called Ciné Lab. The motion picture/photo finishing laboratory only had one reversal processor and a couple of printers. But expansion was planned. Greenberg had already bought out the Humphrey-Pathé Laboratory in Toronto. In 1968 he also purchased the Trans-Canada Laboratory of Vancouver.

Collette's job was to approach would-be customers.

"I told them that I didn't know anything about the film business, but that we had fantastic services. My frankness with the people in the industry must have made them accept me."

Instead of opening a big Montreal lab as planned, Greenberg bought out A.S.I. (Associated Screen Industries) from Du Art in New York. Collette became the representative for A.S.I. By 1971 he was general manager.

"To learn the business internally I got involved with different film projects and followed them through the lab. I discovered problems with films and filmmakers which gave me insight into the technical problems of running the business, but I avoided becoming over-technical.

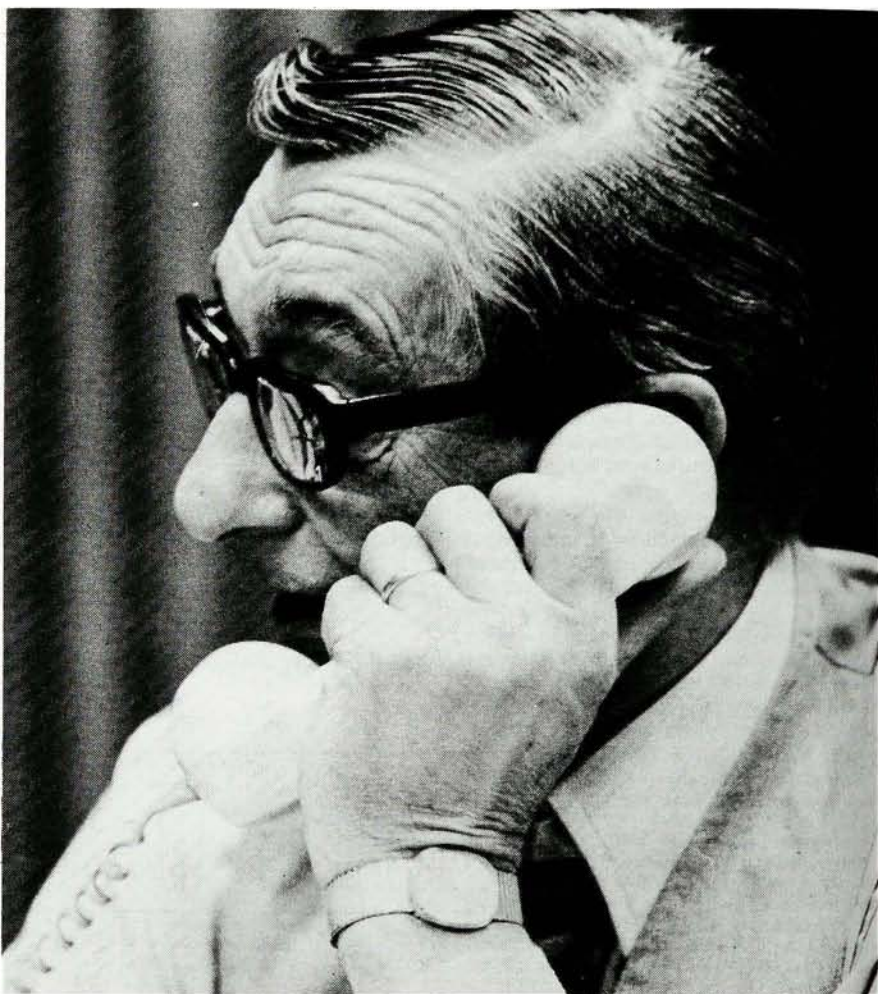


photo: Lois Siegel

André Collette doing business on the phone

"All I had to do was know a little bit more than the filmmakers because most filmmakers don't know too much about the technical aspects of the laboratory. And most film producers are so involved with their own problems that they don't really want to know about the technical problems. They don't need complications. All they want to know is when they are going to get their film.

"It would help if they knew more, but if they did know more, they would have to accept the problems the laboratory has, so subconsciously they don't want to know."

Collette set up a system of service people who were there to provide information and to work with producers and filmmakers to make them aware of the laboratory's problems.

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"A filmmaker is basically a creative person rather than a technical person. Our service and sales department provided a link between the customer and our production people who actually did the physical work. We based our sales on quality and service and especially consistency of quality because all labs in the world have technical problems.

"Part of our marketing approach has been to help the young filmmaker. We are open-minded enough to realize that today's beginning filmmaker is tomorrow's customer. To assist them, we have deferred payments, we've advanced money even to those who have never paid us, we haven't pushed for payments and we've invested our money in the feature film business, sometimes to our great regret and sometimes to our advantage."

In 1977, Collette became president of Bellevue Pathé Laboratory which employs about 75 people.

"We are twice as big as any laboratory in the city, but we don't worry about other labs, we worry about ourselves. A laboratory is always expanding. Each year, there is \$100,000-

INTRODUCING...

\$200,000 for either new equipment or modernization of old equipment which is capital investment.

"In the film business, we have to train people ourselves. Each department has its own training program because it's hard to take a person off the street to become, for example, a timer. A timer has to know about the other technical processes in the laboratory. It takes 2-3 years. He is concerned with standards of colors and what happens to emulsion when it is being treated and what happens to the red and blue when you take the green out. It takes one or two years to become a proficient printer and 6 months to a year to be a processor."

Collette finds young people to be very different than his older employees.

"It's not easy to motivate them or to keep them. You have to give them interesting jobs, pride in their work, and financial rewards. But perhaps that will change when they discover that they have to get involved to accomplish something."

"The problem with film students is that everyone wants to be a director. Everyone wants to be creative. No one wants to be a technician."

"If someone wants to stay in the industry, he will have to diversify himself. How many good directors can we have? A director needs certain talents. One has to realize that he can be something else."

Collette regards himself as a born entrepreneur.

"I learned to wheel and deal in my young days. I do enjoy movies, but unfortunately I don't have time to see them. I'm like the shoemaker who has holes in his shoes. I go to the odd première. I mainly look at films when there is a problem with them. I don't see 10,000 feet of film in a year. I see a roll here or there but rarely an entire feature. When I go to movies, I pay like anybody else — 2 to 3 times a year. I like action stuff."

The days of a film laboratory president are long. During his first five years, Collette used to start at 7:30 a.m. and end his day between 9-12 at night. Now his day begins at 9 in the morning, but he often doesn't exit until 7-10 p.m.

"During the day I deal with internal administration problems and speak to filmmakers. Bellevue Pathé processes and works on close to 50 million feet of film a year and the cost of these operations is astronomical.

Collette also works as director of the Association des Producteurs de Films du Québec, as director of the Association de Maisons de Service technique du Québec and is a member of SMPTE (Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers).

"After Expo at the age of 43, I had a heart attack and my doctors told me that I should go into an easy-type business for the rest of my life. Let me tell you, film hasn't been the easiest business — but unfortunately I love it. I love my work, I love the people."

Lois Siegel

maruska stankova

a creative curiosity

Maruska Stankova is an actress who doesn't like to limit herself. "I can not stay in one place. I love to travel. Before I came to Canada I acted in about 12 countries, and in about 8 different languages. This is

such a pleasure... because all the time it is something new, something unexpected and you are enriching yourself enormously."

Maruska has enriched herself by guest-starring (with a Greek accent) on *King of Kensington*, playing Mata Hari in the *Witness to Yesterday* series and Eva Clarisse in the French soap opera *Les Bergers*. Before coming to Canada she enriched the stage by performing in *Laterna Magika* the famous

CANADA'S BEST!

That's saying a lot, but to film makers it automatically means . . . Bellevue Pathé. It just goes to show that good news really does travel fast in an industry where you have to produce — or else.

And that's a cue to quality, because that's the one imperative we demand of ourselves. We set higher standards for ourselves than even the most discriminating client. We have the technical skills in our people and we have the technical facilities in our equipment. Put them both together and the results make friends out of clients. And that's a cue to quality, too, like: Productions Mutuelles - Cinévidéo - Vidéofilms - N.F.B. - Cinepix - Paramount - 20th Century Fox - Columbia - CBC - Warner Bros. - United Artists - MCA - Universal - Agora Films - Les Productions Cinak.

Our circle of friends and clients continues to grow.

A few of our recent original productions are:

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Rimbaud est Mort
Panique
Les Maléfices -
Cathy's Curse

In Praise of Older Women
Blackout
Jacob Two Two
The Uncanny

Rituals
L'Ange et la Femme
Two Solitudes
Kings and Desperate Men

Recent dubbing of features:

Eric
Les Mensonges que mon
Père me Contait
Massacre à la Scie
Ils étaient Cinq

Le Chien Enragé
Duddy Kravitz
L'Autre Versant de la
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Maruska Stankova's face changes from role to role

Czech ensemble that combines a live actor and his film image. In her native Czechoslovakia, Maruska worked with directors Ivan Passer, Jan Kadar and Milos Forman. In 1975, the actress' 3000th stage performance was celebrated in Canada, where she has performed on both the French and English stage.

Maruska branched out into films in 1973, acting as a go-go dancer turned farm wife in *Et Du Fils* directed by Raymond Garceau. Later, Maruska read the script of John Howe's *Strangers at the Door*. "I knew it was absolutely perfect for me, but nobody would give it to me because the character is very plain, very peasant. Nobody

could imagine that I would be able to play it. People when they see me and don't know me they think I am this urban lady, glamorous. Before the audition they were not sure..., but Maruska got the part.

Maruska had a similar experience when auditioning for a part in *Quintet*, Robert Altman's latest film, shot on the site of Montreal's Expo. "When I played Jaspera in *Quintet* — she's a woman at the end of her resources — Robert Altman saw me, he looked at me and said 'My God — I do not know you simply don't look like that'. I said, 'Well, it depends on the role which I am playing, I simply do things according to the meaning of the role.' He said

'O.K.' and invited me for the screen test to see how my face would look with the make-up because he wanted to make me much older. And when I had the make-up on I looked at myself and I really looked pitiful. Altman came in and I said 'I look so terrible', and he said 'You look so beautiful' and I got the role."

Maruska found working with Altman tremendously stimulating. "He creates an atmosphere of freedom. He lets you really think that you can do what ever you want to and he lets you do it if you go according to his intention. But if you don't, he gently puts you back, so you do not feel he is cutting off your creativity.

"I think on one side he really inspires your creativity, how you bring your character along. On the other side he has a very strong image of what the character does, what the character will do, how the character develops and what the character finally will look like, what the character's position is in the film. He is very, very precise."

When she is not busy filming, Maruska teaches acting in the Drama Development Program of the National Film Board and at Concordia University in Montreal. Maruska re-shapes her classes according to the people she is working with: student or professional directors, actors or scriptwriters. "I'm trying to teach them what an actor needs to perform, that every actor is different. I try to make my students more aware, I try to point out the sincerity of approach and expression of their feelings. First they should try to find those feelings and if they have those feelings, it shows in their eyes. If the feelings are not there, if they are trying to pretend they have them, their eyes are completely blind. Some students when they read a script for the first time start to act already, someone they do not know, so I ask them just to read it flatly and first understand what is going on. If you start falsely, if you start doing things for an effect — it is phony."

Maruska's plans for the future include the major role in an as yet untitled film shooting in Sweden this summer. Maruska said with characteristic enthusiasm, "If there was a film anywhere in the world, I would go there for the sheer curiosity, for the pleasure and for the excitement."

Carole Zucker

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