

playing football all the time. He is one of the biggest influences in my life, not just professionally but personally too."

Pearson and Rose moved to Toronto where they briefly worked together in the drama department of CBC. However, opportunity didn't knock until they took a five page script outline to Ron Weyman, head of the network's film drama department at that time. Weyman was enthusiastic. The outline became a script for the Sunday at Nine series, **Rodeo Rider**. Close on the heels of **Rider** was McLeish's **Wild Horses**, another program for the same series, followed by the script for **Paperback Hero**, which Pearson credits with "lifting me out of the ranks of the invisible."

After a brief stint as a cameraman for the CBC, Peter Rowe caught the eye of Canadian filmmaker Allan King. "He showed me a film he had made, called **Buffalo Airport** and I hired him," King recalled. "Peter spent about two years working for me as assistant editor, director and cameraman. He is very bright, very talented. I always enjoyed working with him." King is thrilled with Rowe's success. "He knows the filmmaking business thoroughly. **Horse Latitudes** was a difficult piece to do but Peter did it brilliantly."

From there, Rowe left to make **Neon Palace**, a pre-American Graffiti resurrection of the 60s. The movie was critically acclaimed and Rowe won Best New Director at the 1970 Canadian Film Awards. However, the film's meagre grosses were not very encouraging. Rowe believes, "This freewheeling exercise would probably do very well if it was released today. It was quite avant-garde and the distributors didn't know what to do with it."

Unembittered by this experience, Rowe reemerged with **A Big Change From High School, Boy!** for OECA. Several CBC productions, including **Backlot Canadiana**, **Susan**, and **Haiti** earned him an American Film Festival award and the Columbus Film Festival Bronze Chris Award. His winning streak continued with **Horse Latitudes**, where he first worked with Barry Pearson.

Although **Paperback Hero** made Pearson a success within his own profession, he was discontent. "The fate of a writer is that you never have anything to

do with the rest of the production. I woke up one morning and decided I would change all that by becoming a producer." Capitalizing on his technical background from university, he co-produced **Crossbar** for the CBC and **Plague**, a low budget science fiction thriller.

In their **Spirit of Adventure** series, Barry Pearson and Peter Rowe are faithfully recreating little known events of Canadian history. Each episode is budgeted at \$100,000 and will feature a well known Canadian performer. (Céline Lomez is starring in the first, and Raymond Cloutier of **Riel** fame is in the second.) Two programs were slated for production last summer; another 12 episodes will be filmed intermittently over the next two years. Judging by CBC's hunger for quality Canadian entertainment, and the winning combination of Pearson and Rowe, this filmmaking duo seems likely to continue its successful partnership for quite some time.

Ellen Bott

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ditching her toeshoes for stardom ann ditchburn

At twenty-nine, Ann Ditchburn is no stranger to the limelight. She has danced with the National Ballet of Canada for twelve years. She has choreographed ballets which are produced around the world to popular and critical acclaim. She has starred in a feature film. And when her professional accomplishments don't get her into the news, her outspoken comments, cool good looks and outrageous dress do.

Most recently she made headlines when she resigned from the National Ballet and publicly deplored the state of the Company. But she didn't resign because of problems with the ballet. Ann Ditchburn has given up her successful ballet career to become a film actress.

"I left the National Ballet because I want to pursue a film career. I will continue to freelance choreograph for awhile, but I feel like I can spend my time in better ways right now. I don't feel like my life is going anywhere fast enough, and I feel like something could be done about that.

"I've discovered incredible parallels between me as a choreographer and me

as an actress. My dancing and my choreography have always been emotionally motivated. In other words, acting-dancing is what I've done. Because of the way I choreograph, I found an immediate sort of home in acting.

"Film acting is about physicality. Physicality is very important because it's very important that the energy be there on the celluloid. And the energy has to be there within the performer. I have developed incredible respect for film actors... I love it!"

Ann has already starred in John Avildsen's **Slow Dancing in the Big City**, which played to small houses and less-than-rave reviews. It was a shock, her introduction to the film business and the film art -- being thrust into a starring role, and being forced to carry the film in Canada: quite different from the familiar security of the National Ballet which she had known for the previous ten years.

But the discipline of ballet has taught her respect for the actors' craft, a craft which she now is working hard to perfect.

"Because I've trained as a dancer for



"And when her professional accomplishments don't get her into the news, her outspoken comments, cool good looks and outrageous dress do." (photo: Chuck Lazer)

twenty years, I've been sort of undercover studying. I knew that I couldn't cash in on a film career with any personal satis-

faction without getting myself ready, and knowing that I was capable of doing really well as an actress -- a good actress."

Following the National Ballet's return from its summer engagement in London, where they performed Ann's "Mad Shadows," she planned to be "in Los Angeles taking acting classes... unless I get work. If I'm not working, it's into acting class, which is where I should be. I should be an actress in practice all the time, whether I'm filming or whether I'm working in class.

"I'd like to get into some gritty roles.

John's (Avildsen) idea in **Slow Dancing** was that he didn't want me to be sexy. That was negating a part of me that I like, and that I would like to deal with and have. He wanted me to be cool and aloof.

"But now, I'd like to get into some realer stuff, some grittier stuff. There are lots of aspects of women that I know about, and their relationships with men.

"I care very much who I work with. It's not important if you're famous or you're a name. What is important is that I respect the creative involvement you have in the work. I think that there has to be a rapport between director and actor and producer.

"I think the opportunities in the Canadian film industry are vast right now. You're talking about working with potentially, really great directors... directors that aren't famous yet, which doesn't mean they aren't great.

"I feel like there are so many Canadian directors who have got to be good, because we're so stubborn to see our talent here. I feel like we've got a lot of possibly great actors' directors, and that's what's lacking right now in the American market. That's the kind of relationship I'm looking for, and I feel very excited about the Canadian scene."

Ann Ditchburn's mixture of hard work and confidence is hard to beat. She is jumping — pirouetting maybe? — into the movies with both feet.

"I've made my decision and I think it's good. I've been working hard in class and I think I've improved a lot. I'm trusting and I'm relaxing and I'm feeling much more at home as an actress than I did when I made **Slow Dancing**, and I feel like I want to pursue it. I feel passionately about it, so I want to go for it!"

Charles Lazer

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