

THE FILM HOUSE GROUP

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NEW

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MIXERS

Mike Hoogenboom, Tony van den Akker,
Elius Caruso, Jack Heeren.

For Further Information
Contact Stan Ford

MINI-REVIEWS of short films this month are from The National Film Board of Canada, seen at its Ontario Region Office in Toronto but, of course, available across the country. All were released in 1983.

LAUGHTER IN MY SOUL

An affectionate look at Jacob Maydanyk who, in 1912 at 19, came from the Ukraine to work on the railroad. He was no ordinary immigrant - he expected to get rich and then continue his art studies in Paris. He's now 90 and, in the church goods store he has operated in Winnipeg for over half-a-century, he reminisces about the experiences of the early immigrants, and the creation of his ethnic cartoon character. "Shteeff" was the Archie Bunker of his day, and his "dulia" (thumb between first and second fingers) has for centuries been his countrymen's sign of defiance.

A celebration and remembrance of the Ukrainian heritage, incorporating Jacob Maydanyk's humorous and spirited tales; archival material and some of the original "Shteeff" cartoons; all woven together with lively music.

d./sc. Halya Kuchmij **cam.** Allan Kroeker **sd.** Leon Johnson, Barry Lank **ed.** Wolf Koenig, Rosemarie Shapley **sd. ed.** André Galbrand **narr.** by John Colicos. **col.** 16mm, 27 1/2 mins.

THE AWFUL FATE OF MELPOMENUS JONES

The young curate is timid, truthful and polite. On the first day of a six-week vacation he visits friends. Unable to say goodbye, he partakes of 11 cups of tea. He stays to dinner and, again, tries to depart. Being unable to tell a lie, he admits to his hostess that he hasn't anything else to do. So he stays and stays, feels bound to pay for board and lodging, and then, the end of his vacation rolls around...

Delightful pastel-shaded animation from Gerald Potterton and rhythmic ragtime composed by Eldon Rathburn wittily project an early short story by Stephen Leacock.

d./anim. Gerald Potterton **mus.** Eldon Rathburn **sd. ed.** John Knight **narr.** by Mavor Moore. **col.** 16mm, 8 mins.

THE PLANT

A winsome fantasy of a kind young man who is surprised to find a small plant struggling through the snow in his front garden. He transfers it inside, pots it, and gives it a home. The plant thrives on his loving attention. It reacts favourably to music and sways to the flute, it has its picture taken, and it grows - and grows - and grows. It becomes bolder, turns on the radio, drinks wine, snaps on the lights, and thus begins the big take-over!

Lush animation and the acting talent of Ghyslain Tremblay combine to make a clever and charming *bon-bon*.

d./cam. Thomas Vamos **co-sc./d. anim.** Joyce Borenstein **ed.** Suzanne Allard **mus.** Pierre F. Brault, Michel Robidoux **sd. ed.** Alain Sauvé, Michel Motard. **col.** 16mm, 13 mins.

IT'S JUST BETTER (From Children In Canada series)

"Chores keep you healthy and strong," states Shawn Peter Dwyer. He lives on Cape Breton with his mother and nine of his sisters and brothers - the complete family is 14 strong. All the kids have chores, the privy is outside, and the well is in the garden. There are sheep in the barn, and an old pick-up truck to get them to the ferry for access to groceries and supplies. Shawn's father is an alcoholic, but he visits every month when he can - "I really like him and love him."

An unsentimental, warm little glimpse of a close to the earth way of life. At 10, Shawn sees some of its advantages quite clearly: "There's lots of love in a big family. You've always got people to play with."

d. Beverly Shaffer **cam.** Kent Nason **ed.** Donna Read **mus.** Chris Rawlings **sd. ed.** Jackie Newell **col.** 16mm, 15 mins.

ALoud/BAGATELLE

Earl Birney hooting and tooting through his sound poem: "To Swindon from London by Britrail", with accompanying archive footage of old trains and serene English countryside. Jazzed up with optical techniques and rapid editing, this great little giggle is reminiscent of Reginald Gardiner and his train impressions. But *Night Mail* and Auden it ain't.

d./ed. Donald McWilliams **cam.** James Aquila **piano:** Françoise Gélinas **anim. cam.** Raymond Dumas **loc. sd.** Douglas Berry. **col.** 16mm, 6 mins.

Pat Thompson ●

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