

VANCOUVER VISTAS

by Rona Gilbertson

The National Film Board is in pre-production on a series of six one-hour programs to air nationally which explores the historical upheaval in the global economy since the Industrial Revolution.

The Political Economy Series challenges Canadians with an unlauded look at the issues that mark the new world order and options for making Canada a technological contemporary of present-day superiors.

Shooting of the series will start in major cities across Canada, with regional directors, at the end of May and will wrap in the fall of 1985. Post-production is expected to be complete by May of next year.

All research has been done by the prospective directors, of which Vancouver contributes three - Tom Shandel, Mo Simpson and Kalle Lasn.

The series marks the first computer linkage between major NFB centers across Canada, allowing for advanced networking as the developmental work and research proceed.

Telefilm, the NFB, CBC Vancouver and the Vancouver Centennial Commission will support the production of eight one-minute animation shorts about Vancouver and B.C.

Marmalade Animation will produce the \$100,000 project, with directors Malcolm Collette, Marv Newland, Al Sens and Barry Helmer, which will be completed by November first.

The subject material will follow a predominantly historic overview of such things as Vancouver's Chinatown, Captain George Vancouver's presence, B.C.'s electric trolleys and the Vancouver Opera House.

Independent filmmaker Jack Darcus has just received Telefilm funding to match with private investment for the production of *Overnight* from a screenplay he wrote himself.

Tom Braidwood will act as associate producer and production manager for *Exile Productions* on the features to commence in early July and to continue for the duration of the month.

So far, Gale Garnett is cast as lead, but all other parts have yet to be filled. Darcus is currently visiting Toronto to look at talent possibilities.

Bobby's Girl is what co-producer Reunion Pictures Inc. Phil Schmidt calls "an elaborate

screen test." Written by Kathreen Neilson, the first 20 minutes were shot in February of this year. From here, the edited version will serve to petition for Telefilm and private funding.

The first draft of the feature-length screenplay will be finished by May 31, and Sandy Flanagan of the *Reel West Digest* will team with Schmidt in co-producing the romantic comedy that centers around three re-united women.

Cast as the three women are Francis Flanagan, Marlene O'Brien and Jane Mortifee.

Writer Kathreen Neilson has just returned from the Oberhausen Film Festival in Germany, where she was invited to show her previous film *Maggie*. *Maggie* was one of only three Canadian shorts invited to the festival.

The Vancouver-based series *Danger Bay* went into its second year of production on May 21. Shooting will extend to Oct. 28 with the episodic count up to 22, from the inaugural 13. The CBC, Disney Channel and Telefilm will again share funding responsibilities.

Though no major changes have been made in format, female lead Debra Wakeham will return for two guest appearances before being replaced by Susan Walden, who, like her forerunner, will fly the

chopper and Beaver aircraft in the series.

Vancouver crews predominate, but the directorship will be split between east and west talent. So far, only half have been selected. John M. Eckert of Toronto will act as the new line producer and Harold Tichenor of Vancouver, as the production manager.

The Writer's Department will again rely on the consulting and contributing expertise of John Dugan, who will coordinate from Los Angeles. Hopes are to make the series more action and adventure oriented.

Having aired on CBC, *Danger Bay* will appear for the first time in the U.S. this fall on Disney Channel.

The opening of the *Pacific Cine Centre* in Vancouver this September establishes the first cultural center in Canada dedicated exclusively to the cinematic arts.

The Centre will house three of Vancouver's non-profit, cinematic organizations: Cine-works, Canadian Filmmaker's Distribution West and Pacific Cinematheque Pacific. As associations actively involved with local film promotion, distribution, production and archiving, the collaboration institutes a substantial force in B.C.'s domestic film industry.

With three years of construction behind it, fundraising continues in an effort to raise the \$400,000 necessary to furnish and equip the building. The Centre will comprise a 220-seat theatre with projection capabil-

ities for 16mm, 35mm, interlocking systems, slide shows, professional Super 8 and Dolby sound, a production studio, a film studies library and a circu-

lating film library.

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Vancouver Vistas

→ greater public, hopes are to increase free screening of independent films, special programming for various audience groups, and guest lectures by local and international filmmakers. Emphasis will be directed toward making Canadian production more visible to the public, in areas both contemporary and historic.

policy advisor for film and video, department of Communications in Ottawa; Frank Jacobs of Entertainment Finance Inc. of Toronto; Claude Desaulniers of the legal firm Stikeman Elliot of Montreal and, Paul Audley, one of three communications consultants to Communications minister Marcel Masse.

New regulations pertaining to the Broadcast Fund have given new energy to the private sector and the well-balanced group of advisors and inquirers, numbering 75 members of the film and legal investment community, found much to consider in light of the aspiring industry in Canada.

Common to the understanding of all was the belief that film investment monies are sometimes fickle, fleeting and hard to find initially. However, the prevailing mood was one of optimism that displayed a reawakening of interest in film development as a secure venture for capital funding.

On April 23, local British Columbian filmmakers met with lawyers, brokers and bankers to conduct a day-long examination and information-sharing over the issue of film development as a viable investment.

Speaking at the seminar were Robert Linnell, head of English-language production for Telefilm; Robin Jackson,

National Film Week in BC in 1986

VANCOUVER - As part of next year's centennial celebrations, Vancouver's filmmakers will take centre stage during National Film Week.

They just got the go-ahead after Communications minister Marcel Masse okayed a \$30,000 grant to the event's sponsoring organization, Canadian Filmmakers Distribution West.

National Film Week will be presented in June 1986 at the Pacific Cine Centre. A special tribute to Vancouver's filmmakers, past and present, will be the centrepiece of the event which will also feature special presentations of classic and current Canadian films and guest speakers.

Festival co-coordinators include representatives of Canadian Filmmakers Distribution West, Cineworks Independent Filmmakers Society and Pacific Cinematheque.

Telefilm doubles Western monies

VANCOUVER, Telefilm Canada more than doubled its financial contribution to the western film and television Production activity in 1984.

Over the past year, Telefilm Canada invested some \$3 million in projects with budgets totalling over \$11 million, Telefilm chairman Ed Prevost said Apr. 22.

Sixteen projects - nine dramas, four children's and three in variety - received financial support through the Broadcast Fund, an increase of 12 projects over the previous year. Eight of these projects are now completed, including *The Prodigal* (Burbank Productions) which won a certificate of merit at the 1984 Chicago international film festival and *Rocky Mountain Christmas* (Olympic TV Productions).

A feature-length production, *My American Cousin*, directed

by Sandy Wilson and produced by Peter O'Brian (Independant Pictures Inc.) is in post-production. An hour-long drama, *Tramp At The Door*, starring Ed McNamara and Monique Mercure, will air on CKND in Winnipeg later in 1985.

Telefilm is studying other measures to further develop regional productions. The agency will announce, soon plans to support project development in all regions of Canada, in particular in the Western and Atlantic provinces.

Animation to cross Canada as showcase for national animators

OTTAWA - Following on last year's successful tour of Canada's 10 best feature films, a cross-Canada celebration of the best in Canadian animation will be touring eight cities this summer.

Beginning in Edmonton (June 5, 8, 12, 15), Calgary (June 7, 10, 14, 17), Winnipeg (June 9, 13, 16, 20), Montreal (June 18, 23, 25, 30), Halifax (June 23, 29, 30, July 7), Ottawa (July 2, 5, 6, 9), Toronto (July 12, 13, 14, 15) and Vancouver (July 15, 16, 22, 23), *Animation* features some 60 selections of Canadian animation assembled by Toronto programmer Richard Gotlib who will be touring with the program. Presented by the Canadian Film Institute and sponsored by minister of Communications Marcel Masse, the National Film Board of Canada and Metropolitan Insurance Companies, *Animation* honours the contribution of Canadian animators to world cinema.

In its brief, four-decade history and despite small budgets and fierce competition from American animation studios, Canadian animation, whose excellence is synonymous with the world-wide reputation of Norman McLaren, has established distinct traditions in a difficult and meticulous craft.

In the last 20 years Canadian animators have received more than 15 U.S. Academy Award nominations and three Oscars - the most recent for Jon Minnis' 1983 *Charade* - as well as countless prizes and awards throughout the world. Yet, within Canada itself, no real forum exists for viewing and assessing the creativity of our own animated films. *Animation* aims to offer to Canadian audiences an in-depth and absorbing introduction to this popularly neglected art form.

Animation previewed at Toronto's Art Gallery of Ontario in April to full-houses.

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