

Box office bonanza in Quebec for French track, home-grown pix

MONTREAL - With eight Quebec-made features concurrently playing or about to play on screens throughout the province, Quebec distributors are seeing a record-breaking year as box-office grosses are expected to hit the million-dollar mark by Christmas.

"It's going to turn out to be a record year for Quebec films," Vivafilms president Victor Loewy told Cinema Canada. "It's a fabulous year."

The big money-makers are both Cinévideo co-productions with France - *Le Matou* and *Hold-Up* - and both are distributed by Vivafilms.

Described by Loewy as "gigantic," breaking all records" *Hold-Up*, starring France's Jean-Paul Belmondo, with 10 prints throughout the province has grossed \$450,000 after three weeks. In its first week on the Famous Players circuits in Montreal, *Hold-Up* grossed \$137,898. At the Parisien theatre alone, Loewy said, *Hold-Up* was doing over \$20,000 in daily business.

"It's very big, it's gigantic,"

Loewy told Cinema Canada. "We hope it will go to Christmas and it should make very close to a million, though we expect to suffer in the two weeks before Christmas," when the U.S. Christmas releases hit the screens.

Le Matou, going into its 12th week on 12 screens throughout Quebec (four in Montreal) is "close to \$850,000 in total box-office," Loewy told Cinema Canada. Montreal grosses are holding after 11 weeks at a respectable \$10,000 a week per screen, for a weekly total of some \$50,000. But in the province, where the films is playing on eight screens from Matane to Sherbrooke, "it's quite embarrassing," Loewy said. In Quebec City, in its 10th week, *Le Matou* had grossed \$4560; in Chicoutimi \$1600 in its ninth week; and \$2200 in Sherbrooke after six weeks. Figures for smaller towns like Matane, La Malbaie and Trois-Pistoles had not been totalled yet.

Playing on four screens in

the greater Montreal area since Nov. 8, Pierre Falardeau and Julien Poulin's *Le King des king*, the legendary Elvis Graton's feature-début, is also bringing smiles both to the film's two co-directors and to distributor Provifilms after a \$32,000 gross in its first weekend.

"We're very happy," Provifilms' Thérèse Attias told Cinema Canada.

Founded by distributor Maurice Attias five years ago, Provifilms this year switched from French to Quebec films, and invested in *Le King des king* as well as nine other soon-to-be-released Quebec features, including Léa Pool's forthcoming *Anne Trister*.

"We're among our own now, and off to a good start," Attias told Cinema Canada.

In alternative Quebec documentary, Montreal nonprofit distributor Cinéma Libre per Louise Gagnon was also "pleased" with *Caffè Italia*, Paul Tana's docu-drama on Montreal's Italian community, which completed a three-week at L'Autre Cinéma rep house that drew almost 300 spectators, netting Cinéma Libre a 35% return or \$1658.

Another Cinéma Libre release, *Le Choix d'un peuple*, Hugues Mignault's documentary on the 1980 Referendum, played two weeks at the Arlequin Theatre and another two weeks at L'Autre Cinéma drawing a total audience of 3324, and \$2402 for Cinéma Libre from the Arlequin run.

A third release, Gilles Carle's Picasso fantasy *Ô Picasso*, just opened Nov. 10 at new Montreal art-house *Le Milieu* to a disappointing first day attendance of 125 people.

At the National Film Board, French Production was in the process of releasing three new features: Diane Létourneau's docudrama *Une guerre dans mon jardin*, premiering at the Outremont rep house Nov. 15; Jean-Thomas Bédard's documentary *Le Combat d'Onésime Tremblay* at the NFB Guy Favreau Theatre Nov.

16, and Claude Grenier's Franco-Manitoban hour-long *Le Vieillard et l'enfant*, based on a story by Gabrielle Roy, opening at the Outremont during the week of Nov. 17.

With the second in les Productions La Fête's "Tales for all" series, *The Peanut Butter Solution*, Michael Rubbo's first venture into comedy feature filmmaking, opening via distrib Cinémaplus in wide release in Quebec and across Canada early in December, the Quebec boom looks set to continue well into the winter.

Vivafilms will be bringing out Nardo Castillo's *Claire cette nuit et demain* in January

and Yves Simoneau's new thriller *Pouvoir intime* in March.

In February, Provifilms will be releasing Pool's *Anne Trister*, which advance word in describing as even more fantastic than *La Femme de l'hôtel*.

As to why the sudden surge, Vivafilms' Victor Loewy has a ready explanation.

"They're movies," he told Cinema Canada, "and they've got nothing to do with Quebec - or China for that matter - and people really like that."

"The Quebec public is very loyal to their films as long as they're not political films, which people just don't want to see anymore."

Academy list announced

TORONTO - The Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television announced Nov. 14 the 31 features, 18 feature-length documentaries, seven short documentaries, seven live-action shorts, and eight animated shorts in competition for the 1986 Genie Awards.

Feature films titles include *90 Days*, *The Boy in Blue*, *The Care Bears Movie*, *La Dame en couleurs*, *Le King des Kings*, *Jacques et Novembre*, *Joshua Then and Now*, *Just Another Movie*, *Le Matou*, *My American Cousin*, *Night Magic*, *One Magic Christmas*, *The Peanut Butter Solution*, *Samuel Lount*, *Separate Vacations*, *Storm*, *Timing*, *Visage Pâle*.

Feature docs include *Abortion: Stories From North To South*, *Canada's Sweetheart: The Saga of Hal C. Banks*, and

Tears Are Not Enough.

Short docs include *No More Hiroshima*, *Kodo* and *Neon, An Electric Memoir*.

Live action shorts include *Passion: A Letter In 16MM*, *Working Title* and *Pluie d'été*, while animated shorts include *Anijam*, *The Big Snit*, and *Sylvia*.

Quebec festival

QUEBEC CITY - Organizers of the Festival du Film de Québec report that 1985 was the most successful year in the event's three-year history. The Quebec festival, held in late August at the same time as the Montreal World Film Festival, attracted approximately 16,000 spectators, as opposed to 12,000 in 1984 and 10,000 in 1983.



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