

TORONTO FILMMAKERS' CO-OP

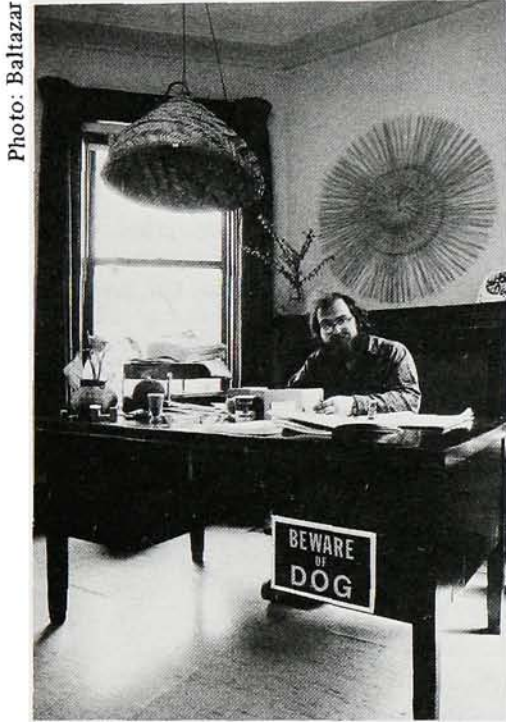


Photo: Baltazar

Bill Boyle, our new co-ordinator

"WHAT IS THE CO-OP?" is a question which is often asked of us and not often fully answered. Since the Co-op is, by definition, a hybrid type of organism, with as many meanings as it has members, it is not well defined in any one statement. If that had to be done it would best be summarized as a support organization for independent filmmakers in Toronto.

But that is not half the story. So, in the present issue of the Co-op newsletter RUSHES, we attempted a little self definition in search of our true "entity identity." What follows is a summary of what the Co-op is — functionally, legally, potentially — from various points of view.

To Co-op member Barb Matheson

"A free association of beginners; a pooling of ignorance into which an occasional stone of brilliance is dropped by a professional."

To the Lawyers

The aims and objectives of the Co-op are:

1. To promote interest and skill in the

art of film, and to encourage the development of interest and knowledge about independent filmmaking.

2. To serve as a repository and source of information regarding filmmaking activities.
3. To initiate, facilitate and encourage the production of films by members and independent filmmakers; to act as a film producer; to obtain possession of, and access to, filmmaking equipment and services for the use of its members.
4. To publish any newspapers, periodicals or documents; to hold conferences, meetings, exhibitions and discussions; and to do any other things, or make any other arrangements in order to make known, promote or attain the objects set out herein.
5. Subject to the MortMain and Charitable Gifts Act, to solicit, accept and receive, by way of transfer, gift, subscription, legacy, devise or otherwise, any money, property, or anything of value whatsoever, either as endowment or to meet the general expenses of the organization.

To Co-op member Anna Russell

"I've found the Co-op so far to be a surprising place. I can always expect an open reception, going there excited about something, or even dragged right out. Either way is ok because people are there to exchange whatever is up. Working together on creative things is really satisfying; people exchange possibilities and, as filmmaking is a very curious business, there is always someone who knows someone who knows what you are looking for when it comes to creating something. Every project is worth getting involved in for some reason or other, and everyone can contribute as there are so many varied things to do on a co-operative film"

To its members

The Co-op provides the following services, facilities, programs, publications and projects:

Programs:

1. workshops in camera; sound, editing; scriptwriting; lighting; animation and specialized workshops for beginners and women. These are taught by professionals, run 6-8 weeks at a cost of \$1 a week, and are held in the evenings

2. screenings of members' films, completed or in progress, followed by discussion, are held every Sunday at 7 p.m. at the Co-op. The Co-op also organizes public screenings of members' films at festivals such as Sensory City; at the St. Lawrence Centre; and on the Co-op's own television show to appear this summer on Rogers Cable TV
3. Seminars with directors, producers, distributors which are question and answer sessions to provide background information in different area of film.

Publications:

1. RUSHES, an erratic but entertaining newsletter
2. film information booklet now being prepared
3. regular page in Cinema Canada

Politics:

The Co-op is a member of the Council of Canadian Filmmakers through which it is carrying on the battle for an indigenous Canadian film industry. The Co-op has prepared and submitted several major briefs to Government in the last three years, and this year presented an intervention to the CRTC regarding CBC's failure to utilize independent Canadian filmmakers. The Co-op also participates in numerous conferences.

Projects:

Script competitions, an OFY film production, meeting on the union situation, a script library, involvement in a Conference on alternate cinema are some of the projects which the Co-op has, or is, sponsoring.

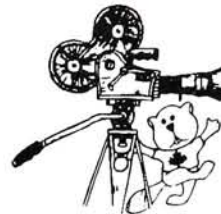
Production:

The Co-op has produced one OFY film on old people; a short film in this year's Beginners' Workshop; and a co-operative film made by the collective efforts of the graduates of the winter workshop program

The Co-op is trying to find funds to produce a \$100,000 feature and to do a series of films on the workshop program.

Services:

1. discount on all lab services
2. screening facilities in 16mm
3. information on jobs, festivals, grant applications etc.
4. limited library of film books and magazines



406 Jarvis Street, Toronto

5. discount on subscriptions to Cinema Canada magazine

Equipment:

Three editing benches equipped with viewers, synchronizers, splicers and re-winds; 1 motorized synchronizer; two moviolas (effective June/74), one Bolex.

Parties:

The Co-op has great Xmas parties.

To Co-op member Tom Urquhart

"The Co-op is one hell of a hockey game."

To Co-op member Dave Derry

"My not so pocket-sized dictionary explains co-operative as: 'a group of people combining to produce an effect'. Film is the golden fleece that has led many a person on a protracted odyssey right back to square one. The Co-op's function is simply to provide a location, consultants, and direction to any person with the wherewithall to ask for it and the consideration to assist whenever possible in return. It is the experience to enter a field where the inexperienced need not apply. To some a hobby, the Toronto Filmmakers' Co-op is, in itself, a name only . . . the animal is quite a different story: people giving and taking in turn to produce something where left to any one the individuals there could be nothing."

To a more jaded Co-op member

"The Co-op is a madhouse of insecure psychotics seeking mutual support".

To its funding agencies

The Co-op is a service and educational organization for independent filmmakers in Toronto. It exists to assist the production of independent films by providing training in all aspects of filmmaking; reducing the prohibitive costs of filmmaking by providing discounts, services and facilities; acting as an information and resource centre putting filmmakers in touch with each other and with the resources available to them in Toronto; promoting the work of independent filmmakers through screenings for members and the public; working to improve the practical and political conditions of film production and distribution in Canada; and by publishing a newsletter.

To Co-op member Suzanna Plowright

"The Co-op is a place to stand; a place to grow"

To the Co-ordinator

"The Co-op is a machine for its members. It is, alas, not an automatic machine and not a Daddy Warbucks machine: it operates manually, sometimes creakily, on the energy of its members. Some use it well, some not so well, and others just ride it till it gets them where they are going.

It began as a collection of people who wanted to make/learn about/see films, and thought working together would make it easier to reach their goal. It has become a support organization serving hundreds of members with diverse interests and needs. As it gets bigger, there is a danger of its becoming static in its role and less flexible to the needs of its members. There is danger too of its becoming merely a "service centre" of film where people stop by to pick up what they need without making a reciprocal investment in the organization.

If it is to retain the collective nature on which it was founded, it will have to rely on its members using it well and using it well means, I think, not just participating in the programs and services which the Co-op offers, but initiating and working on new ones. In this way, the Co-op can function as a nucleus for a number of satellite projects which grow out of it and feed back into it. And by using members' energy this way, the Co-op will have a much greater capacity for involvement and for living up to its potential."

FLASHES/ashes . . .

Sandra Gathercole has resigned from the position of Co-op Co-ordinator as of June 1st. She will be missed by everyone, and we wish her the best of luck in all her future endeavours.

Bill Boyle has been hired as the new co-ordinator. Bill will be working with a full-time assistant to cope with the tremendous growth the Co-op has experienced as a result of Sandra's work.

Due to an increase in funding, the Co-op now has the money to complete "The Old People's Film". For those of

you who have forgotten (it has been two years!) this was the first film produced by the Co-op with the help of an O.F.Y. grant. The crew (Eugene Buia, George Csaba Koller, Elsa de Jonge, with the help of dozens of other Co-op members) shot this black and white half-hour documentary in the summer of 1972, worked an additional six months on editing the film, etc. after all the money had run out; and have since been waiting for enough funds to get a final mix. Eureka! We Found the Funds! The crew and Co-op are excited about finally finishing their 'labour of love' and the announcement for the film's World Premiere will be coming soon.

The SECOND CO-OP PRODUCTION is also nearing completion. Written and directed by Bill Boyle, and worked on by just about everyone else in the Co-op, this 18-minute color dramatic epic will also be premiering in 406 Jarvis - The Centre. For full details on this production, including fabulous fotos - see the beautiful, brand new issue of *Rushes* - the Co-op's very erratic newsletter. Pick up a copy soon before they're all gone!

The Executive Committee passed the following new policies, effective June 1st:

1. Co-op information will now be appearing monthly by publishing *Rushes* bi-monthly on alternate months of *Cinema Canada's* publishing dates. So . . . this issue of the magazine has come out in June, expect another *Rushes* in July, then the magazine in August, and so forth. . . . The policy sounds great, now we'll have to see if it can work.
2. All new Co-op people will be expected to be members in good standing (means you've paid your dues) for 30 days before using the Co-op's discounts.
3. Lab bills will now have to be paid upon receipt of your film.
4. Workshop fees have been increased to \$2 per session. The workshops have been very successful this year. A new batch will be starting shortly, and with this increase we hope to get the workshops to be completely self-supporting.

Join the Movement! Signing Off. . . .

Cain St. Cleofas
Foreign Correspondent