

Robert Ménard's

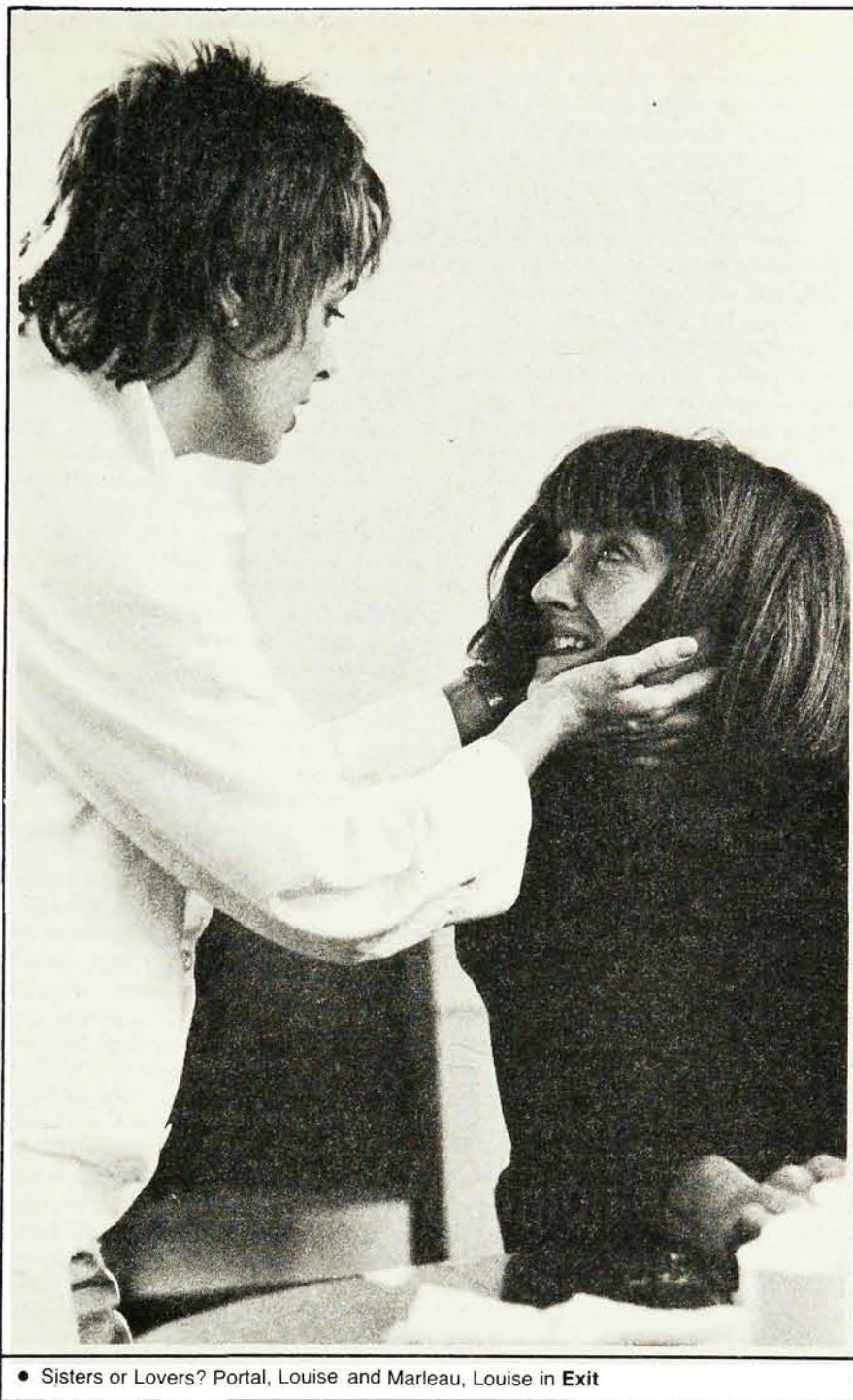
Exit

The same evening I saw *Exit*, I happened to catch Louise Marleau on TV promoting this "psychological thriller" she's the star of. And Marleau gave a very concrete version of the various motivations of the character Marie, the ghost-tormented composer whose descent into creative madness she portrays. What was interesting about Marleau's account was how much clearer it was than the film I'd just seen.

Exit is a film that, on the surface at least, had everything going for it: Quebec's Garbo as its lead; the legendary Pierre Mignot as director of photography; Robert Ménard as director (Ménard's earlier feature, *Une Journée en taxi*, was excellent); and a supporting cast that includes such talents as Pierre Curzi, John Wildman, and Louise Portal (who plays, Marleau revealed on TV, Marie's sister, though you wouldn't know this from seeing the film). And yet *Exit* doesn't work, at least not for this reviewer — despite Marleau, despite Mignot, despite Wildman who never amounts to more than an overage Ricky Schroder, and despite *tutti quanti*. Or rather it just collapses into Outremont melodrama, a Perils of Pauline saccharine saga which, if it is about anything, is about the sanctity of private property, all of which may of course be exactly what its producers (and broadcaster Tele-Metropole who kicked in a third of the budget) intended.

Yet there is in Québécois film and TV production a definite genre one could call "Outremont melodrama" which ranges from silly soap-operas of the *Jamais deux sans toi* variety to serious soap-operas of the *M. Le Ministre* kind to the scathing *Déclin de l'empire américain* or the trendy *Anne Trister*. What there's never been yet, in this genre, is a film that would attempt to explore some of the unconscious terrors of owning a big house on Bloomfield; in short, the psychic or internal costs of embourgeoisement, the total lifestyle commitment to keeping, up appearances come what may. And, taking *Exit* seriously for a moment, this is what the film might have been, but isn't.

Another thing *Exit* might have been, still taking it seriously (if less so), is an allegory for creativity. Once upon a time, Marie, brilliant young composer, was in love with John (John Wildman), her rival at the Conservatory. For reasons never explained, he is killed in an "accident" and she's left feeling mighty guilty. So she quits composing, marries a guy in a silk suit with an Audi (Pierre Curzi), has a kid and a big house on Outremont Park, and runs her own successful music school for children. Marie's got it made, right? Wrong! There are creative yearnings that take the form of hallucinating John at the piano tormenting her with a concerto



• Sisters or Lovers? Portal, Louise and Marleau, Louise in *Exit*

he'd written for her. Hubby, perhaps annoyed by her harping on about John, dumps her, but she keeps the big house, the kid and the Volvo, renting out the garage to some sleazebag (Michel Côté) she takes up with. There are (very) veiled intimations of (sexual) kinkiness between her and Simon, the guy (and a gun turns up in his van). But there's not enough mystery to satisfy her creative yearnings. She keeps hallucinating John tickling the ivories. In the propriety of her Outremont living-room, no less! And this drives her crazy.

Much craziness later, Marie pulls herself together enough to go consult a spiritualist (who seems to do a whopping trade in assuaging the psychic terrors of unhappy bourgeois). She explains that access to the creative is blocked by a thick layer of junk called "the astral" which at its lowest levels consists of criminality (and bad movies?) and at its highest, religion and spirituality. John, the medium explains, is trying to prevent Marie from breaking through to her creativity. (Actually the sequence with the medium contains a very interesting theory of psychic mem-

ory that would be worth going into in more detail if *Exit* were a better film. As it isn't, I won't.)

Marie screws up her courage and returns to the big Outremont house. There, armed with her piano, she battles with the ghost of John until her creativity has beaten him into submission and he vaporizes. Marie, now reassured that she too is a creative genius, wanders out of the big house, truly hers at last, and in the early morning sunlight, goes for a swing in the park. There, no doubt, to contemplate a career in real estate. Roll credits.

There's still another level of reading one can give *Exit*, one that's gender-specific within the general allegory of creativity. And this would be about women grappling with the guilt of abandoning the mother/house role — it's significant here that one of the first shots of Marie's kid shows him wearing vampire make-up — and becoming ego-based "creative" types of their own, like men. But there's little to be gained in overloading *Exit* with interpretations, since the film itself can't support them or, at best, only does so weakly.

For the principal problem with *Exit* is not Marleau who gives it everything she's got (from "sexy sultriness" to wailing and shrieking) nor the technicalities of filmmaking (though a boom mike wanders into the top of the frame at one point, which is always exasperating) nor the script, which despite a certain emotional woodenness from time-to-time, seems to pull itself together; it's the direction. And here the failing is that of a misreading of basic codes: why have menacing and creepy Michel Côté machoing about bare-chested and in tight jeans unless he's going to actually do something to Marie, not as it happens to ask her to dance for him? Why have Louise Portal soaking in the bathtub to menacing music while the camera travels slowly in towards her unless something is about to happen to her, instead of just cutting away to the next scene? Why have Portal and Marleau floating about naked in a pool, Portal tenderly holding Marleau, unless it's to lead up to sex of some or other kind? But Marleau informs us Portal is Marie's sister, so what's the point of the scene? After much dramatic carrying on by Marie at her school late one night and her hallucinating that Simon is strangling her, followed by his sudden arrival, the film cuts to the next day as the children are getting ready for class, when Marie's assistant makes what appears to be a horrifying discovery when she looks into the room Simon and Marie were carrying on in the night before; why does the viewer not get to see what the assistant saw? Because there's nothing there. And that, regrettably, must serve as a judgment about *Exit* itself.

Well, not utterly. The one thing *Exit* does have to show for itself is a thumping musical score by Richard Grégoire and Marie Bernard, including some wonderfully passionate pianowork. It's real movie music that plucks at the heartstrings with such gusto you can feel your handkerchief getting drenched as you sit there. It's the kind of sentimental excess that could allow a film director to get away with murder. Ménard doesn't.

Michael Dorland •

EXIT d. and p. Robert Ménard p. and sc. Monique H. Messier prod. sec. Johane La Barre p.man. Lorraine Richard p. co-ord. Nicole Hilaréguy loc. man. Luc Martineau p.a. Lucie Bouliane. Claude Laflamme, Marie-Claude Larouche p. acct. Daniel Demers, Louise Supré 1st a.d. Michel Gauthier 2nd a.d. Louis-Philippe Rochon cont. Claudette Messier d.o.p. Pierre Mignot cam. Jean Lépine 1st asst. cam. René Daigle 2nd asst. cam. Sylvie Rosenthal photog. Pierre Dury sound Serge Beauchemin boom Thierry Hoffman gaffer Daniel Chrétien elec. Marc Charlebois, André Sheridan key grip Emmanuel Lépine, Robert Auclair art. dir. Françoise Séguin assist to art. dir. Blanche Boileau sets Patrice Bengle assist sets Ian Lavoie cost. des. Michèle Hamel ward Martine D. Picard hair Pierre Sindonbs make-up Réjean Forget pub. Suzanne Villeneuve l.p. Louise Marleau, Michel Côté. Gabriel Panaccio, Louise Portal, John Wildman, Pierre Curzi, Sophie Clément, Marie-Michèle Desrosiers, Germain Houde, Lise Roy, Luis Saraiva, Claude Tremblay, Pierre Aubert, Francine Ruel, Sarah Salvy, Diane Miljours, Tristan Bernier, Jean-Bruno Cordeau, Gaston Perrault, Jr., Lorraine Prieur, Emilie Phaneuf, André Pélouquin, Estelle Holmes, Anne-Marie Leduc, Lauréat Lestellier, Christine Séguin, Michel-René Labelle. p.c. Les productions Videofilms Ltée with financial participation from Telefilm, la Société générale du cinéma du Québec and Télé-Metropole Inc. colour 35mm running time: 97 min.

Denyse Benoit's

Le Dernier havre

Le Dernier havre (*The Last Harbor*) is a film scripted and directed by Denyse Benoit from a novel by Yves Thériault. One of the great names of Québécois literature, both popular and critically successful, Yves Thériault is a man with little education. He is known for his stories of the common man in Québécois society; the woodsmen, fishermen and farmers of French-Canadian origin, as well as the Indians and Eskimos.

His two best known works, *Agaguk* and *Ashini* have as their principal character an Eskimo and an Indian respectively. In *Textes et documents*, a collection of comments on his own work, Thériault states that there is within him a continual concern with the hopes and aspirations of minority groups faced with the power of the majority. In the same article, however, he refutes the pretensions of critics who have found in *Ashini* (the story of an Indian chief who wants to give back to his people their pride and their ancient way of life) a symbol for the dispossessed French-Canadian. However, in reading his novels it is hard not to see his concern for the preservation of minority cultures as a concern which stems from his own experience as a Québécois. This concern is allied to the recurrent theme of man's relationship to nature and the forces of the universe.

Le Dernier havre (1970) is the story of an old Québécois fisherman who lives in a little fishing village in the Gaspé. Somewhere between 80 and 90 years old, he knows that his days are numbered and resents the indignities of a useless life. In the modern world of mechanized fishing there is no place for his knowledge and skill. The novel has two main symbols, the restrictive society of the village and the limitless freedom of the ocean. For him the modern

ways which have overtaken the fishing industry are chains, traps, servitude.

Belonging to a big fishing company and fishing by the ton in huge trawlers is the lot of his son (a lot which the son seems happy enough to accept, since it has brought prosperity) but it is a fate which the old man despises. He also despises the other old men of the village who have accepted their lot as "old men" and have turned their backs to the sea. Most of his time is spent avoiding the restrictive interest of the village society and especially the watchful eye of his daughter-in-law. For the old man has found a boat, an old fishing barge, abandoned but, like himself, still seaworthy. His struggle to bring this boat back to life and launch it into the sea again, without the knowledge of the village, forms the core of the plot in the novel.

The film is fairly faithful to the events of the novel but somehow misses the essential meaning of the book. Most of Denyse Benoit's previous work has been in the theatre (she has made only one other film) and the main focus of the film is on the personality of the well-known Québécois actor, Paul Hébert, who plays the old fisherman. He has received much praise from the French critics for his wonderfully appealing performance. Indeed he does portray the old fisherman as an appealingly whimsical, cordial old man who has a mystical relationship to the sea.

I suppose it is always a mistake to read the book first but this certainly didn't fit the image I had formed of a cantankerous and wilfully independent old man whose views of the society around him were closer to contempt than to benign amusement. But it is not only the character of the old man which has changed, the whole atmosphere of the story has become much sunnier and more optimistic than that of the book. This is, after all, a book which ends in a suicide. For the old man eventually fixes up the boat, takes it out for one last, glorious sail on the limitless ocean, and then pulls the plug and drowns. In the movie, this last action hardly seems credible. There has been so much sunniness throughout the film that we are unprepared for such a drastic ending.

The daughter-in-law, who in the book would not even let him sit in his favourite chair by the fire, has become round and jolly and sweetly concerned for his welfare. The lovely children and warm family life of his son are well in evidence although we never really see them in the novel. The inhibited ways of the village become the nosy curiosity of funny old men. The sea, with its darkness and its storms, has become picture postcard pretty and so has the rest of the village. I have nothing against the classic beauty of Roger Vanherweghem's cinematography but it is symptomatic of the undercutting of the novel's themes by the resolute optimism of the film.

I do have something against the music. Every time the old man goes back to his abandoned boat, sweet, syrupy orchestral music fills the theatre. Like all the previous elements, the music adds to the sentimentalisation of the character and the story. His relationship to the sea becomes a purely mystical one. This is established from the beginning of the film, where we see him as a young boy entranced by the ocean, and is carried over to the old man by a cut from the young boy looking out at the sea to the same shot with the old man replacing the boy. It is emphasized by the flashbacks which give us his memories of the sea and of the same boy leading his boat through a fog. In the novel the boat is led by a small child who, it seems to me is the Infant Jesus, which changes the import of the scene considerably. In the film, the old man sees visions of the sea while sitting in a bar and there is a young girl, Agathe, after whom he names his boat and who is also somehow symbolic of the depths of the ocean. None of these elements are in the novel. His only motivations for committing suicide in the film become the fact that he is getting old (although Paul Hébert only looks about 65), and his mystical, poetic love of the ocean. Something seems to be missing. There is a strength in the novel, a darkness of vision which is totally absent from the film.

It is true that the old man in the novel loves the ocean but it is not a purely poetic love. It is also a love for an inde-

pendent way of life. One where a man's skill, strength and luck was needed to wrest a living, and to stay alive in his small boat on a not always benign sea. It is an independence which has vanished with the coming of a modern, industrial society. The old man is sickened by this loss of independence, not only for himself, but for the whole community. It seems to me that his suicide is very like the suicide of the Indian chief in *Ashini* — an act of protest, a last wilful act of independence. At the end of *Ashini*, the chief goes to the Happy Hunting Grounds and is in high favour with the great Manitou for the heroic battle he has fought for his people, a battle to give them back their pride and their independence. It is a battle without hope but a courageous one and his last act in this battle is a suicide which, I believe, is very like the suicide of the old fisherman.

It is true that translating a work of literature into a popular medium does tend to change the ideology of the text to a more acceptable fit with the tenets of society. Thériault himself wrote many radio plays and often repeated the themes of his novels in the plays and vice versa. As a matter of fact, since the novel is written as a monologue, it could easily have become a radio play. Possibly this is one of the problems with the film since the old man's point-of-view cannot come across as strongly without the interior monologue. This film does seem to be an example of the theme of a work of literature being changed to suit mass-media taste.

The optimistic tone of the film is interesting in terms of what appears to be a general trend in the Québécois films of the '80s. If in the '70s Québécois films became known for their miserableness, focusing on the alienated and disaffected within Québécois society, the tone of recent films (such as *Le Matou*) have taken a more positive stand towards Quebec's society and the opportunities it offers the individual. I think it is this climate of optimism which *Le Dernier havre* reflects, but it is a climate ill-suited for a faithful rendition of Yves Thériault's vision.

Mary Alemany-Galway •

• Robert Rivard and Paul Hébert as the old men and the sea



LE DERNIER HAVRE d. Denyse Benoit in collaboration w. p. Marc Daigle assoc. p. Danny Chalifou assist d. Carle Delaroche-Vernet sc. and adapt. Denyse Benoit sc. consult. Jean-Pierre Lefebvre d.o.p. Robert Vanherweghem original m. Alain Payette film ed. François Dupuis sd. ed. Jean-Pierre Cereghetti make-up Nicole Lapierre ward. Mary-Jane Wallace p.a. Robert Giroux, Sylvie Cayouette cont. Monique Gervais assist. cam. Claude Brasseur photos Pierre-Jean Gauthier elec. Denis Ménard assist. elec. Conrad Roy grip Jacques Girard art d. Hughes Tremblay asst. art d. Georges Léonard, César Dessi s. Esther Auger, Yves St-Jean asst. s. Marie-Andrée Lamoureux asst eds. Florence Moureaux, Anne-Marie Leduc sds. eff. Andy Malcolm asst. sd. eff. Kathryn Crosthwait voice re-rec. Michel Charron post. sync Hubert Fielden m.rec. and mix Paul Pagé musicians Alain Payette, Marc Bélanger, Bernard Jean, Marcel St. Jacques, Céline Cléroux add. m. Alain Déry, Martine Michaud mixer Michel Descombes, André Gagnon sec. Monette Brown, Suzanne Castellino, Denise d'Amours admin. Marina Darveau lab. Bellevue Pathé sd. lab. Sonolab titres Ciné-titres Opt. Film Docteur du Québec neg. ed. Negbec. lp. Paul Hébert, Louise Dussault, Claude Gauthier, Robert Rivard, Jean-Marc Cereghetti, Jean Richard, Jean-Guy Moreau, Marc Legault, Marcel Huard, Chloé Sainte-Marie, Rolland Bédard, Noël Moisan, Roxanne Babin, Benoit Arsenault, Paul Simier, Camille Desmarais, Bernard Fortin, Eric Gaudry, Walter Massey, Jean-Louise Millette, Jean-Luc Montminy, Denyse Patry, Olivier Thiboutot and the people of Bonaventure, Baie des Chaleurs. p.c. Telefilm Canada, La Société générale du cinéma du Québec and Prima films. colour 35mm running time: 83 min.

Michel Drach's
**Sauve-toi
Lola**

Téléfilm Canada has finally found the right vehicle in which to transport what it believes the French-Canadian public wants. It may have been a costly investment, but a Lada it ain't. *Sauve-toi Lola* has "miles to go" written all over its little white-walled wheels.

A Canada-France co-production directed by Michel Drach, the film has Carole Laure, Jeanne Moreau, Robert Charlebois and Sami Frey waving from the window while Lewis Furey honks the horn. The road is strewn with cancerous potholes but able-bodied men in white gloves and lab coats (every movie loves a man in uniform) direct the traffic and gallantly retrieve the stricken women who will undoubtedly stumble over the cracks in the sidewalk. It's hard, after all, to walk in stilettos. Not to mention when you also happen to be dying of cancer.

The plot of *Sauve-toi Lola* is about seven women finding themselves, individually and as a group, coping with the horrors of cancer. The moral of the story is, no matter how beautiful or rich or happy a woman may be, cancer will seek her out like an old retribution and down she will tumble, off the pedestal Drach seems to believe she craves.

Drach attempts to combine elements of farce and slapstick with the melodramatic gravity of human drama but he does not succeed. Evoking a cinema of three dimensions, where life is unpredictable and death can laugh no less than cry, *Sauve-toi Lola* is embarrassingly burdened by its one-dimensional script and the all-too-familiar gestural theatrics of Laure.

What it draws upon instead is the "obvious" resources of a group of female characters and the unconscious audacity of the director. He prefers to shock the sensibilities of his audience by fetishistically objectifying "sick women," rather than exposing the realities of ailing and frightened human beings.

Drach may believe he is daring when he has Carole Laure touching her own breasts in a church, but while he has the redeeming presence of mind to squeeze some puritan humor out of that scene, he does not question the authority or status of any other institution or social convention, whether it be the medical establishment, the power of men, or the subjugation of women.

Drach is not denouncing either a repressive Catholicism or societal mores with their hands-off attitude towards sexuality. He is only grasping at the easy availability of contrasting images, such as a murderous priest leading the police to his victims' remains in a church (this subplot is dropped from the narrative almost immediately after its introduction). Fundamentally, then, this conservatism is not being challenged *per se*. Drach, like an errant altar-boy, just wants to have fun.

His repertoire of toys consists of the seven (sinful?) women who meet at the



• Objects of Michel Drach's fetishization of illness in *Lola* (Carole Laure and Dominique Labourier)

hospital and comprise what their doctor (Sami Frey) calls "le club du cancer." The doctors are not only glamorized but they are given the power to define the lives of their patients. These cancer victims grouping together seem to have no more significance than a bridge club; though they share treatments and trauma, their interactions consist mainly of exaggerated platitudes and quarrels with bitchy nurses.

At the center of this community are their benevolent and wise doctors, in whom they entrust their lives and, more succinctly, their bodies. The men are the icons whose mysteries work wonders. Says Frey to Laure, "When you take your car to the garage, you don't ask the mechanic how he fixed it." And, in case we don't get the analogy: "I'm sorry I compared you to a car."

What is at stake for these women is not their lives but their personifications of femininity and social status. Jeanne Moreau, who plays the wife of a diplomat, uses cancer to confront her bourgeois standing. At a party she and her husband host, she descends the staircase in white death-mask make-up and proceeds to hand out her household silver to the astonished but composed guests. This "hysteria" is only the reaction of an emotional woman in extreme circumstances. She is brought back upstairs by a caring though paternalistic husband. And it is he who will later phone Frey to administer the final needle that will let her die.

Though Moreau manages to retain some semblance of strength by her forceful acting and presence (not to mention the resonant history of her screen persona), Laure yields twofold:

to the overt ravages of her cancer, and to the covert control of the men in her life - All under the watchful eye of the director.

Like the *Story of O* which articulates what *Sauve-toi Lola* merely mumbles, nothing is her own, not even her "breasts...which we may explore at will...(she has) lost all right to privacy or concealment."

Erotic masochism is ever-present. Laure is conducted through her cobalt treatment wearing a black bra and tights. She is seduced by another doctor who is aroused by the vulnerability that frailty brings. Says he, "Women with cancer are always waiting, as if for a man." By this point she is breastless and hairless, and though she earlier feared the treatments would rob her of her feminine allure ("I will grow a beard and turn into a man!"), her subsequent mannequin appearance is still sexually satisfying. She may not be a man, but she is not her own woman: she is his.

What experience does Drach have with cancer? His attempts at psychology fail revealingly. "Don't come close, I have cancer," says Laure to a policeman who wants to ticket her car. In another scene, Laure, who plays a lawyer, successfully defends her dying friend who has been charged with running up an unpaid bill. The hardnosed judge is a caricature of a sexless career woman or repressed lesbian. But Laure seduces her by appealing to the voluptuous woman in us all: "Wouldn't you want furs or jewels or a Riviera holiday?" Apparently, dying is a girl's best friend.

In more intelligent hands, these sequences could be played out with their humanity intact, but Drach pillages them like a conquering victor whose power lies in destruction.

Even the final scene, when Laure wants to share the news of her recovery with the two remaining patients, is completely self-absorbed and bereft of sympathy. The women, one a laborer who worked at Moreau's husband's factory for 25 years, and the other a young woman whose depth of character is conveyed with a compassion that must have surprised Drach (she represents the only internal criticism the film allows, though her target is the snobbish vacuousness of "le club"), stand outside, in autumn leaves, unable to hear Laure who hovers entombed behind a hospital window. They are poignant in the beauty of nature; in spite of Drach, they are life in death. And Laure, because of him, is death in life.

Leila Marshy •

SAUVE-TOI LOLA A France Canada co-production produced by Onyx Productions and Films A2 in France and Cinepix in Canada. With financial participation from Centre National de la Cinématographie, Ministère de la Culture, Sofimage, Sofica Conseil, Gestimage and Téléfilm Canada. **d.** Michel Drach **s.c.** Jacques Kirsner **m.** Lewis Furey **1st a.d.** Xavier De Cassan **2nd a.d.** Leslie Fargue **cont.** Ariane Litaize **d.o.p.** Robert Alazraki **1st assist. cam.** Muriel Edelstein **2nd assist. cam.** Gérard Mercier **stills** Christophe Rouffio **sd.** Claude Hazanavicius **1st sd. assist.** Thierry Morlaas **ed.** Henri Lanoc **assist. ed.** Catherine Bernard **gaffer** Robert Beulens **grip** Jean-Baptiste Dutreix **set. dec.** Nicole Rachline **assist. dec.** Jean Brunet **unit man ext.** Pierre Sicre **make-up** Daniele Vuarin, Arlette Pipart **cost. design** Monique Perrot **ward.** Yvette Bonnay **prod. man** Jean Lara **prod. sec.** Caroline Perchaud **admin.** Arlette Gendrot **unit man.** Jean-Marie David **assoc. unit man.** Pierre Boustoulier **unit man.** Jean-Marie David **assoc. unit man.** Pierre Boustoulier **line p.** Gabriel Boustani **assoc. p.** Nader Attasi **c.d.** Carole Laure, Jeanne Moreau, Dominique Labourier, Sami Frey, Robert Charlebois, Jacques François, Jean-Yves Gauthier, Guy Bedos, Isabelle Pasco, Philippe Khorsand, Marilyn Even, Béatrice Avoine, Bela Szafron, Halima, Julien Drach, Alain Sachs, **colour** 35mm **running time:** 106 min.



• Anthony Nahuliak sells his farm to pay *The Price of Daily Bread*

John Paskievich and Michael Mirus'

The Price of Daily Bread

Winnipeg filmmakers John Paskievich and Michael Mirus started out to make a film about an auction sale and emerged with *The Price of Daily Bread*, an understated, disarming eulogy to a dying institution — the family farm.

The timing of the film's release last May, coinciding with the disastrous fall in world wheat prices, could not have been more appropriate. When the film begins, the bank already has Anthony Nahuliak by the throat — there is no way he can repay the big loans he was encouraged to make some years before. Events proceed with deliberate inevitability: Nahuliak, a farmer in Manitoba's stark Interlake region, can't pay; he has to auction off all his equipment but is still in debt; finally even the house and land must be sold and Nahuliak, stubbornly insisting that he still wants to farm, heads out to Alberta in search of work.

As in their first film, *Ted Baryluk's Grocery*, Paskievich and Mirus tell the story of an uncomplicated man whom events have passed by. Once again the narrative is conveyed through black and white still photographs, recorded voices, and a voice-over.

The art in these films is firstly in Paskievich's arrestingly human photos, then in their arrangement, and in the complementary relationship between the photos and the sound track. When Nahuliak receives a call from the auctioneer asking when he can come and look at the machinery, his hand half-

covers his face in an unconscious gesture of restrained despair. When Nahuliak's daughter is shown gathering eggs he says, "Dixie used to complain about doing chores but not any more. She cried when we told her we might have to move away from here." Just then, from above, we see the eggs in the pail — perfectly white and oval and fragile, symbols of the life the Nahuliaks are losing.

Almost from the film's first frame, Nahuliak's father is a disapproving presence. He has had the farm passed on to him from his father, has passed it on to his son, and now he becomes increasingly withdrawn as he realizes that this inter-generational continuity is going to be broken. The auction sale is presented with energy (the auctioneer trading jibes with the crowd) and humour (one farmer comments: "My boy's a school teacher. He doesn't need machinery — they even buy him his own pencils") and pathos (Nahuliak sitting in his combine as it's being auctioned, as though he is himself on the block). Then, after the sale, there is a white expanse of the fields in winter and the matter of fact observation: "Dad died a few months after the auction."

If there is a fault in this piece it is that, in its unqualified approval of family life, ethnic roots and good neighbours, it pulls a little too hard at the viewer's heart strings. But it is so well put together that you hardly notice. In the background there is the shadow of a Darwinian social system, indifferent to its victims. Against that background the Nahuliak family stands with dignity.

Ralph Friesen •

THE PRICE OF DAILY BREAD d./sc./ed.p. John Paskievich, MMichael Mirus cam. John Paskievich addt. cam. Peter Tittenberger narr. Anthony Nahuliak sd. rec. Mick Mirus, Leon Johnson sd. ed. Michael Mirus anim. cam. Svend-Eric Erikson, Jill Haras re-rec. Clive Perry music Kelly Senkiw prod. co. Galicia Films Colour., running time: 16 mins.

Jean-Claude Lord's

He Shoots, He Scores

Some say nothing exemplifies Canadian culture better than hockey. Others say the best vehicle for conveying a sense of nationhood to all Canadians is the CBC, and that it is drama which most clearly reveals us to ourselves, imparting a sense of unique identity. What then could be more essentially Canadian than a CBC-TV drama about a hockey player, broadcast coast-to-coast in both official languages?

Was it thoughts like these that led CBC/Radio-Canada to get involved in Claude Héroux's production of *He Shoots, He Scores*, 13 one-hour episodes broadcast Tuesday nights at nine? If so, some vital elements got lost in the translation of the idea to the screen, because the series is derivative, superficial and uninspired, a *Dallas* of the hockey rink. The most ambitious television project ever produced in Quebec is a blatant betrayal of the principles of excellence, distinction and relevance espoused by CBC/Radio-Canada.

Pierre Lambert, a 20-year-old junior hockey player from Trois-Rivières, makes it to the NHL with the Quebec "Nationals" In the process he deliberately injures his best friend, and, forgetting the girl he left at home, guilelessly and guiltlessly slides into bed with man-hungry Marie-Lou. But not to worry, he's scoring goals and the fans love him. Sure, his teammates give him a hard

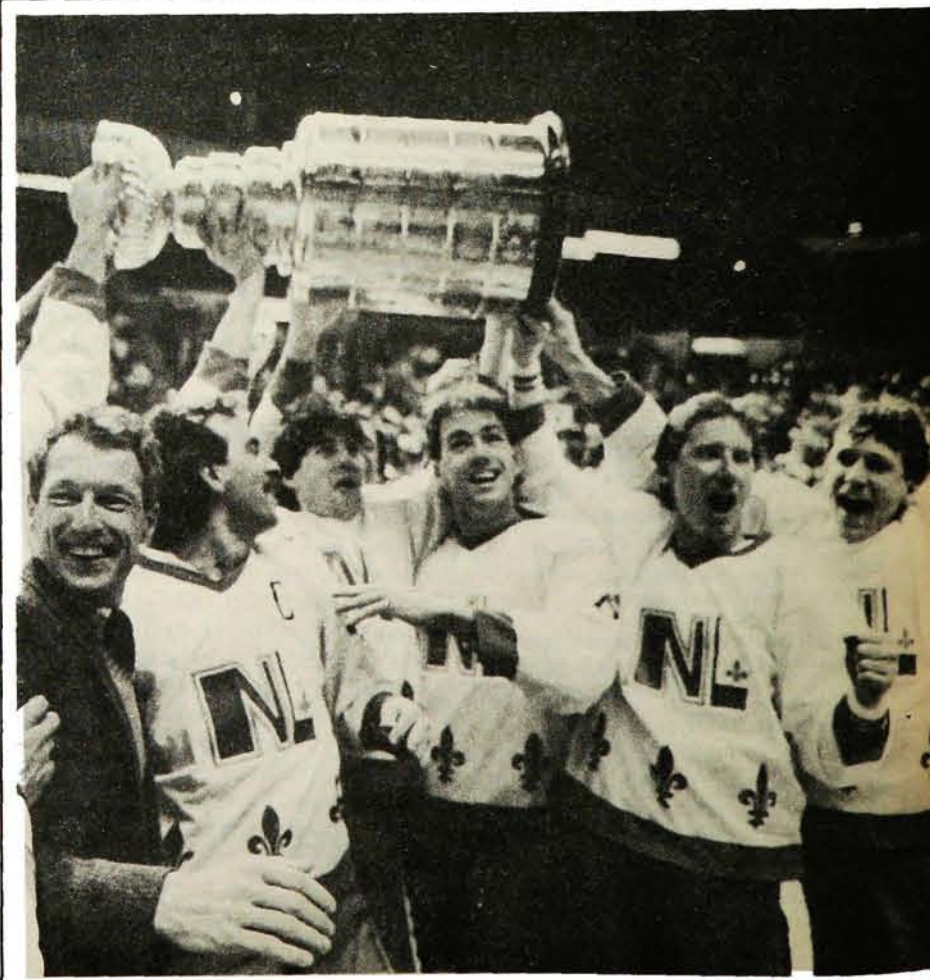
time at first for getting bigheaded, and sure, the coach is extra hard on him in practice. It doesn't matter: the fans adore him, his mother and girlfriends adore him, and he adores himself. The producers' expectation seems to be that the national TV audience will happily join in. Pierre is cute, charmingly naive and talented, a winner. What more could we ask?

The whole project smells of soap opera. Nearly all the shots are interiors. The characters are absorbed in scheming, betrayal, sex, success. Some have drinking problems, others have dying fathers with tubes up their nostrils. Everybody who's anybody is beautiful. People say things like "hockey drives a man mad" or "love is the only thing that makes any sense in life." It better, because the way people in *He Shoots, He Scores* talk doesn't.

When Pierre's sister dallies with his teammate Marc Gagnon over drinks in an expensive restaurant, she mentions that her late father was a fine businessman and that her mother didn't finish university, then interrupts herself: "But I don't know why I'm telling you all this." Neither do we. There is simply not enough substance in her life for any revelation to be interesting or truly personal. The same holds true for everybody else.

As if dead dialogue weren't enough, the series also suffers from technical problems. In each of the first three episodes the sync is off at certain moments. Why should this happen in a big-budget production, even if it was shot in two languages simultaneously?

He Shoots, He Scores misses the opportunity to show Canada to Canadians. Apart from kitchens, living rooms and boardrooms, there are interiors of hockey arenas. None of this is at all distinctive. The Nationals travel to Winnipeg, but all we see is an anonymous



• No more guessing — The Nationals win in *He Shoots, He Scores*

hotel room (where Marc Gagnon has an encounter with an equally anonymous smiling blonde) and the front page of *The Winnipeg Free Press*. Quite possibly the producers, who include the Société-Nationale de Télévision Française (TF-1), wanted to avoid a too specifically Canadian look, in the hope of being more attractive to international markets. It is precisely the mistake made by the Canadian Film Development Corporation (CFDC) in supporting numbers of faceless failures in the past. The CFDC's successor, Telefilm Canada, is also participating in **He Shoots, He Scores**. Canadian, you say? Pity.

Nor do we get much of a feeling for what Quebec is like, or what it's like being a Quebecer, unless certain xenophobic Freudian slips count. After a win the team trainer, a zany fellow, wraps a towel around his head and salaams, praising Allah. In another episode the coach, angry with the team owner (whose name is Goldman), tells the general manager: "And if that's not clear enough, you can translate it into Yiddish for me." This is awkward, if not painful.

He Shoots, He Scores skates along the surface, its protagonist too shallow to command anything more than adolescent interest. Pierre Lambert, like Duddy Kravitz, is an intense, ambitious young man willing to use people and betray his friends to get to the top. But Duddy could at least be funny (there are no laughs in **He Shoots, He Scores**), and is somewhat pathetic in contrast to his grandfather, who retains some sense of tradition, some values.

No such perspective, no suggestion of any limit on self-indulgence or self-expression, exists in **He Shoots, He Scores**. "You think you're going to explode, you feel so good," is Pierre's description of the sensation of scoring a goal. No ironies here; feeling good is what it's all about.

It may be that the series will attract mass audiences. If it does, it will be for all the wrong reasons. Not everything has to be **The Tin Flute** or **Maria Chapdelaine** but, even in the hedonistic '80s, it is possible to create characters and situations that viewers can care about. In this, **He Shoots, He Scores** fails completely, and the failure is the more significant when the project has so much money, and such important cultural issues, riding on it.

Ralph Friesen •

HE SHOOTS, HE SCORES A dramatic new 13-part series about a young hockey player's rise to stardom. On CBC Television. The series was produced by Claude Héroux Productions in association with the CBC, Société Radio Canada, O'Keefe Breweries, Ltd., and the Société-Nationale de Télévision Française (TF-1), with the participation of Telefilm Canada. p. Claude Héroux d. Jean-Claude Lord s.c. Louis Caron, Réjean Tremblay trans. Tim Reed prod. sec. Nicole Forget d.o.p. Bill Wiggins unit. man. Pierre Laberge assist. unit. man. Paul Bujold prod. sec. Louise David acc. Yvette Duguet prod. assist. Claude Lacoursière, Gilbert Lucu d. Jean-Claude Lord 1st a.d. Frank Ruszczyński 2nd a.d. Ginette Paré 3rd a.d. Kim Berlin casting Hélène Robitaille cont. Marie Daoust d.o.p. Bernard Chentrier assist. cam. Jean-Marc Casavant sd. Henri Blondeau boom Pierre Blain art d. Dominique Ricard set dec. Jean Bourret props/buyer Michèle Nolet props Michel Comte assist. props Réal Baril make-up Louise Mignault hair Richard Hansen cost. design Sylvie Krasker assist. cost. design Mary Jane Wallace ward. Marianne Carter gaffer Yves Charbonneau best boy Marcel Breton key grip Marc De Ernsted grip Stéphane De Ernsted l.p. Carl Marotte, Jean Harvey, Chantale Labelle, Marina Orsini, Macha Meril, Benoit Girard, Marc Messier, Michel Forget, Yvan Ponton, Sylvie Bourque, Lise Thoun.

Iolande Cadrin-Rossignol's Contes des mille et un jours ou Jean Desprez

The attempt to honour a figure from the past can end in romanticizing, creating nostalgia, in effect, separating us further from the one we wish to remember. Iolande Cadrin-Rossignol's most recent documentary, **Contes des mille et un jours ou Jean Desprez**, works against such tendencies. This video portrait recalls with clarity, energy and a real sensuousness the life of important Quebec media personality, Laurette Laroque, better known by her practical pen name, Jean Desprez.

After three years of research, interviews and script writing, Cadrin-Rossignol emerges with a careful compilation, a work which embraces the many facets of Desprez's life. The video traces Desprez's history using different sources; archival photographs and sound recordings, drawings and sketches, dramatization (in which actor Jacqueline Auger-Laurent portrays her mother in the role of Jean Desprez, adding an interesting dimension to the structure of the work: Auger-Laurent appears both as herself, discussing her childhood, and in fictive sequences as a young Desprez), interviews with colleagues, friends and admirers, are woven together. The various techniques are well integrated. The resulting multiform structure provides the space necessary to tell the tale of a woman who regretted only having one life when it would take at least 10 to satisfy her own dreams and aspirations.

Such regret worked to spur the artist on. Desprez's contribution to various media in Quebec is enormous: she wrote extensively for radio and television, was a journalist, critic, columnist, worked both in film and theatre. A cataloguing of Desprez's diverse efforts alone would provide material for a documentary. Yet, **Contes des mille et un jours** moves far beyond any such objective account. Instead, an impressionistic collage is achieved; we approach Jean Desprez through the video, we have a sense of being near her. Two organizing principles of the video set up such a sensory depiction of Desprez: the radio tapes of Desprez herself commenting on her métier, her life and the society she lived in, and the candid testimonies of her daughter, Jacqueline Auger-Laurent. In both instances it is the voice that transports us to an epoch very different than the one we live in now: the pre-television era.

During the '40s and '50s, radio held a primary place in peoples' homes and hearts. **Contes des mille et un jours** is an evocation of that time. It is fitting, then, that such attention has been paid to sound quality in this production. The rich tones and clear inflections are heard with pleasure, the dramatization of broadcasting in the radio station is viewed with interest, and Desprez's response to television at the time of its birth is understood with humor and delight. "Oui, c'est beau", she said, "when one closes one's eyes it's almost as nice



• Writing a thousand and one tales, Jacqueline Auger-Laurent as her mom, Jean Desprez

as radio."

The most popular radio show Desprez wrote was *Jeunesse dorée*, which continued on the air until the time of her death in 1965. As one listener recalls, this 'radio-roman' was so well-liked that you could walk down the street on a summer day when the windows were open and still follow the program. Michelle Rossignol, director of the National Theatre School, speaks of the importance of radio for actors at that time. Radio was used as a tool for voice training; actors would listen to Desprez's programs from week to week, identify the various characters and imitate their styles.

The adventure series for children **Yvan l'intrepide** is remembered by listeners for its fantastic voyages where one's imagination was brought into other cultures by a young flying doctor.

Desprez's interest in other cultures is only one indication of the searching, open mind behind her creations. Considered an avant-gardiste by many who knew and worked with her; Desprez challenged her world and times consistently by voicing her concerns in her writing. *La Cathédrale*, her first play dealt with homosexuality, class issues and sexism. She was an advocate of Quebec talent and fought hard to dispel the mistrust of its own worth found within Quebecois theatre. She spoke out against American cultural imperialism and how it affected Quebec in particular; she convinced the public of their heritage and constantly defended Quebec actors and writers.

Jean Desprez identified with strong, accomplished women; she wrote programs on Marie Curie and Lucy Stone. She spoke directly to the women of Quebec, reminding them of how they

had been neglected for three centuries, how they were involved in their own neglect. She fought for practical causes, lobbying for the family allowance cheques to be issued in the mother's name as opposed to the father's.

An awareness to all forms of oppression informed Desprez's work on many levels. This keen sensitivity was probably honed by the marginality she felt in her own life. Although Jean Desprez did not stop producing since the beginning of her career in radio, she experienced that daily insecurity felt by so many artists. She never knew what the next day would bring; she wondered always, as a single parent, if she would manage to raise and support her daughter.

Contes des mille et un jours raises the question, if indirectly, of art's insecure place in society; at the same time it celebrates an artist who placed herself proudly in the world for all to hear and see.

Patricia Kearns •

CONTES DES MILLE ET UN JOURS OU JEAN DESPREZ d. Iolande Cadrin-Rossignol based on an original idea by Louise Carré exec. p. Louise Carré assoc. p./admin. Claire Stevens assoc. p. p. man. Suzanne Laverdière p. sec. Danielle Charlebois 1st assist. d. Thérèse Bérubé unit man. Lucie Bouliane d.o.p. Jean-Charles Tremblay 1st assist. cam Pierre Duceppe sd. Serge Beauchemin assist. sd. Yvon Benoit art. d. Carole Paré assist dec. Vincent Gaucher gaffer Claude Fortier 2nd elec. Sylvain Bergévin key grip Pierre Charpentier make-up Mikie Hamilton ward. Anne Beauchamp hair Nicole Pelletier loc. photog. Romeo Garaicyp l.p. Jacqueline Auger-Laurent, Lucie Guibault, Andrée Pelletier, Roland Chénail, Anie Pierard, Richard Duhaime and interviews with Philippe Laframboise, Pierre Dagenais, Roger Garceau, Colette Dorsay, Michelle Rossignol, Jacques Normand, Huguette Proulx, Yvette Brind'amour and others. Produced by La Maison de Quatre Inc. with financial participation from Telefilm Canada, La Société générale du cinéma du Québec and with the collaboration of La Société Radio-Canada and the Dept. of communications at UQUAM. Colour Video running time 75 min. 51 sec.

Tahani Rached's

Haiti-Québec

Filmmakers who intend to articulate the negative aspects of a society from within one of the filmmaking institutions of that particular society run the risk of offering inconsequential interpretations. With this NFB documentary on Montreal's Haitian community, Tahani Rached has taken no such risks. *Haiti-Québec* is a film of great compromise.

Now it's not that the NFB is institutionally incapable of making uncompromising films. Indeed, there are a number of recent NFB films which have earned the distinction of exclusion from the sectarian airwaves of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (and hence from the inner recesses of the Canadian mind). For example, here are some recent films that the CBC has considered unfit for Canadian television: *Incident At Restigouche* (Alanis Obomsawin, Quebec, NFB, 1984) about the conflict between the indigenous people of Quebec and the Quebec Police Force, *Abortion: Stories From North*

And South (Gail Singer, NFB, 1984), *Democracy On Trial: The Morgentaler Affair* (Paul Cowan, NFB, 1984) both reasonably uncompromising examples of films exploring the abortion issue and judicial structures.

Haiti-Québec, made by a permanent staffer at the NFB, will, in all likelihood, receive no such censorial sanction, and so is obliged to gain its credibility without the assistance of state media suppression. Unfortunately it is a film which offers not even the most rudimentary analysis of racism, ethnicity or class formation, never mind explaining why people were forced to leave Haiti. And, as a consequence it is a film of omissions and folkloric condescension.

Rached takes us from one interview to another without accessing anyone who has a particularly informed or historical view of the problems Haitians face in Montreal. To be sure, one appreciates that the film actually interviews blacks and attempts to broach the issue of racism, but the film's initial positive value soon succumbs to a folkloric, anti-analytical posture as Tahani Rached tactically avoids confrontational issues. By not particularizing the determinations behind the flight of Haitians, *Haiti-Québec* offers only oblique, inarticulate, and half-developed references to the repression that prevailed during the *Baby Doc* regime, a régime on whose human rights record the Quebec government was and is silent. In fact, Quebec is now home for Dr. Roger Lafontant, one of the ex-régime's henchmen. But these and other facts were excluded from the film's discourse. There are no particulars given

about Quebec investments in Haiti, nor is there any foregrounding of Canadian foreign policy and the Canadian silence on human rights violations in Haiti.

Another film on Haiti, *Bitter Cane* by Jacques Arcelin (1983), did lay out the complexities faced by the Haitian people. This film provided some impressively developed/researched ideas which relate the historical pillage of Haiti by American multinationals. Sugarcane workers were accessed in the film, and tactically added to the theoretical work done by scholar/activists who share the struggle.

Haiti-Québec does little of this back and forth editing between activists and workers; rather, what it does do is to look at a complex situation with a liberal gaze.

Haiti-Québec moves from one sentimental interview to another, opening with a Haitian taxi driver who is sending a tape-recording of his voice to someone in Haiti. We cut back and forth to him throughout the film. We see and hear another man singing on a Montreal bus. We see a Haitian writer-worker relating his interpretations of life in Quebec. All of this gives the film an appearance of multicultural exotica.

If many references are made to racism in the Montreal taxi industry, none are made analytically. The taxi theme is introduced by some utterly predictable interviews with white drivers who say the expected Quebec "apartheid" sorts of things. (No attempt is made to depict the white drivers who are with the Haitians in their fight against racist strictures. And we all may have at one time or another suspected that not all white

taxi drivers are racists.)

Bitter Cane offered a range of workers opining. *Haiti-Québec* does not. It does not even examine the Quebec judicial system's leniency in fining (under \$200) the owners of Taxi de l'est and Taxi Moderne after they fired black drivers. Nor does it show the resistance that Haitians are launching from Quebec.

In one especially stereotypically bad scene, we are shown black teenagers breakdancing across the screen. Pure exotica. Nothing more. Even the Montreal-based Haitians edited into the film do little to expand on the linkage between Haiti and Quebec. The film weaves its way in and out through Haitian life in what can only be termed folklore, the kind of misrepresentation Robert Flaherty might have been guilty of on a bad day or if he had had to work within the ideological constraints of a major oil company. With *Haiti-Québec* Tahani Rached has managed both a bad day and a film that works within the confines of self-censorship.

Julian Samuel •

HAITI, QUEBEC d. Tahani Rached **research** Bernadette Maugile, Tahani Rached **cam.** Jacques Leduc, Jean-Pierre Lachapelle **assist. cam.** Serge Lafortune, René Daigle **sd.** Claude Beaugrand, Thierry Morlas **light** Roger Martin **prod. man** Michel Dandavino **2nd unit cam.** Alain Dostie **assist. to 2nd unit cam** Michel Paulin **2nd unit sd** Marcel Fraser **songs int. by** Sylvanie Narcisse **sd for songs** Yves Gendron **film ed.** Babalou Hamelin **assist. film. ed** Louise Blais **narr.** Deny Lefrèrière **sd. ed** Claude Langlois **assist. sd. ed** Miriam Soirier **sd. mic** Hans Peter Strobl **sd. mix. trainee** Shelley Craig **p.** Roger Frappier **admin.** Monique Létourneau **assist. admin.** Louise Cousineau. A National Film Board of Canada production. **Colour** 16mm **running time**

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SCAN LINES

by Joyce Nelson

"Fabulous" Fiftieth

Service, closing down regional centres of production, and other "painful draconian measures".

In following the coverage of this situation – not just the words used by the press, but the language of the key players – it's hard not to recognize some extraordinarily telling imagery at work. All the cuts and axings and slicings conjure up some horrifying axe-murder from a Stephen King novel. On the other hand, the talk of reductions and "nothing left to trim" and "not an ounce of fat left" suggest a kind of imposed anorexia nervosa at work. And perhaps there we have an accurate image for the CBC: fifty-year-old downer starved to a skeleton and mer-

cilessly ripped and slashed in the process.

With that image in mind, it was strange indeed to watch CBC's **Fabulous 50th** – the telecast aired on Sunday, November 2nd, in "celebration" of the fact of having dragged its bleeding and starved skeleton to the steps of this anniversary. Perhaps not surprisingly, the production seemed somewhat hallucinatory: floating post-cards of interviews soaring into and out of the foreground, while a strange mix of video-clips danced behind in the background, usually making little sense with words of the interviewees and sometimes contradicting them outright. What seemed a more surprising aspect of this hallucination was its rather odd optimism

about the place and role of the CBC, as though it were not now facing possibly the worst moment of its history. Bypassing a significant opportunity to actually spell out for viewers the real situation and conditions, the production seemed too content to evoke a sense that everything is "fabulous", not to worry about dear old mum. The very thinness of the production, however, as well as its hallucinatory qualities, tended to undermine the contrived well-being.

In a way, all this is exacerbated by the current press focus on the "misplaced" \$57 million that the CBC somehow "lost" in its switch to computerized accounting. Playing on themes of mismanagement and ineptness, this focus tends to overlook a larger question that seems far more important than computer-error. It would be much more interesting to know what happened to the \$600 million or so that has been cut from the CBC by Parliament over the last few years. There's a bit of accounting, and accounting-for, that deserves real attention.

The 50th Anniversary of the CBC occurs in the midst of extraordinarily debilitating conditions which call into question the very life of the Corporation. Already long reeling from previous budgetary axings – federal cutbacks of \$153 million just in the last two years – the CBC is currently preparing for yet another \$65 million shortfall in its operating budget: the result of rising inflation, as well as Finance Minister Mirabel Wilson's order that all government departments and agencies reduce salary budgets by two percent. Nor is the CBC expected to get any substantial increase in its annual grant from Parliament.

Recognizing the impossibility of the situation, both Pierre Juneau and Denis Harvey, head of English television, have said that the cuts would now have to come in terms of programs, that "there is not an ounce of fat left" anywhere else. The possibilities include "slicing one or two hours of Canadian programming a week", axing the stereo FM radio network, shutting down the Northern

A recent screening at the National Film Board office in Toronto organized by Gerry Flahive, the super energetic and newly-appointed Ontario Publicity Co-ordinator, revealed a fistful of interesting stuff, and all from regions other than Ontario...

SHIPBUILDER

A young girl's voice relates the strange story of Tom Sukanen, an immigrant from Finland back in the '20s, who built a ship on the Prairies, 17 miles from the nearest water – the South Saskatchewan River. He devised his own equipment and tools, and planned to haul the ship overland to Hudson's Bay. The hull weighed around 20 tons and, on a good day, he made 20 yards. For more than two years he headed towards the river. He then left the ship on the Prairies and went to the river bank to work on the boiler. People started saying he was strange – starving, and working himself to death. He was eventually taken to an asylum, and within a year he was dead. The hull of his ship can still be seen rusting on the Prairies.

An interestingly spare re-creation which preserves a tiny episode in Canada's past – with the question of Why? remaining unanswered. The little girl's narration, as one who remembered the eccentric shipbuilder, is a charming touch.

exec. p. Michael Scott. d. Stephen Surjik. p./cam. Charles Konowal. sc. Ken Mitchell. ed. Norman Sawchyn. sd.ed. Carol Wenaus. mus. Marcelle Nokony. Greg Zuck. Narr. Kristjana Gunnars. A Prairie Region production with the assistance of CBC/Saskatchewan. 6 min. Col.

THE LAST DAYS OF OKAK

The ship Harmony visited Okak, the Inuit settlement, twice a year with supplies, and took away fish and fur. When it arrived in November 1918 it was, as usual, like a holiday. Five days after the Harmony left, the Spanish flu started.

Women who were children then, still have vivid recollections of the deadly epidemic and how members of their families perished. The terri-

MINI REVIEWS

by Pat Thompson

ble nightmare when the dead outnumbered the living; when the dogs, crazy with hunger, fought for the corpses; when houses had to be burned, and a hundred dogs were shot. Most of the people who had left for the hunting camp were also stricken with flu and, out of 36, only 18 were left to bury. A little girl who survived in a shack, today talks of being protected by a dog who kept the others from attacking her.

Three hundred and fifty-three people died in Okak, and it was abandoned in the summer of 1919. People still come to the bay to fish and visit the site where relatives died – and the rhubarb patch still survives and thrives. A present-day Inuit brass band plays "Now thank we all our God" over the end credits.

A chilling document that brings this forgotten settlement back to the present-day by a skillful use of archival stills, and of voice-over narration based on diaries and writings at the time of the epidemic. Authenticity is reinforced by survivors recalling the horrors, and glimpses of the desolate area as it is today.

exec. p. Barrie Cowling. p. Kent Martin. d. Anne Budsell. Nigel Markham. sc. Anne Budsell. photos/ed. Nigel Markham. sd. Jim Rillie. sd.ed. Eric Emery. Narr. Waldo Scharwey, Fran Williams. An Atlantic Region production, with assistance of The Canada Council Explorations Program, Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers Co-operative and Newfoundland & Labrador Arts Council. 24 mins. Col.

STREET KIDS

It's estimated that 200 juvenile prostitutes work the Vancouver streets, both male and female. At a group home, they find some approximation of normality for a short while, and discuss – haltingly in most cases – their anger, frustration, and the desire to lead another sort of life.

The endlessly patient and supportive child-care workers listen to the sad litanies. Young men beaten by fathers and stepfathers and leaving home in the early teens; young girls sexually abused as small children by fathers, experiencing disagreements with mothers and unhappiness at school. Attempted suicide at 14, pregnant at 15, "The tricks are goofs." Life on the street doesn't seem much better, though it may bring in money, most of that goes for endless cigarettes and drugs.

The way out is difficult, and usually hampered by poor education and a chronic lack of self-esteem and general knowhow. "It took me a year to apply for a social security number..." A social worker points out that it is little by little, and it isn't going to happen overnight.

The gritty, non-glamorous netherworld of teen prostitution is well captured by the black-and-white photography. Unsensational, devoid of patronizing attitudes and never preachy, this small film is a good kicking-off point for straightforward discussion of a sad, serious problem in today's world.

d. Peg Campbell. cam. Moira Simpson. ed. Haida Paul. p. Jennifer Torrance. exec. p. John Taylor. A Pacific Region production. 21 min. b&w

GET A JOB

Doo-wop, doo-wop, da-da-da, da-da-da, da-da-da – and it's into the saga of Bob Dog, a young animal in search of a job. At home in the Tacky Arms, his wife is leaving him to pursue her own career – just like a soap opera, with bags of emotion and an organ thrumming in background. Bob D. is dog-tired and, lulled to sleep in front of the television, he dreams of getting work. To various musical beats of the '40s and later – Presley, Carmen Miranda, the Andrews Sisters, plus a singing frog (a steal from Warner Bros. "One Froggy

Evening"?) – his odyssey unfolds. Mailing the résumé, telephone follow-up, dressing neatly for a series of interviews, bucking the vicious competition, not aggressive enough, too aggressive with a Mr. Pig executive – and so it goes.

A wonderful tribute to the early animated styles of Disney, crammed full of movement, stylishly coloured, with loud and brash original music that fits right in. Oh, yes – Bob Dog does get a job, but *how* is a tad too cynical for this reviewer's taste. But, coming right at the end of a highly entertaining presentation of a "message", it does little harm to the film as a whole.

p. Derek Mazur, Michael Scott, Brad Caslor. exec.p. Michael Scott. d./anim. Brad Caslor. sc./lyrics Brad Caslor, Derek Mazur, Jay Brazeau. mus. Jay Brazeau. add.anim. Cordell Barker. Voice of Bob Dog, Al Simons. A Prairie Region production. 10 mins. 16mm.

CARRIED AWAY

A man walks through a sombre, rocky, black-and-white photograph of a landscape. A coloured animated butterfly entices him on and then transforms itself into spectacles (the rose-coloured variety). Fantastic things happen – the man is in the centre of a rainbow, twirling it about his fingers like a long ribbon, bubbles turn into balloons, and meteors shower vivid confetti particles. In an animated setting, a menacing face glowers in a cloud, but the man stands firm in his cloak of many colours. A blinding flash! – and he floats out towards the woman in the yellow cloud, his spectacles fall... and turn into a coloured butterfly.

The animator is the man braving the vicissitudes of the creative process, the ups and downs, the bright and the grey moments. An inventive, though slight, little film with a light touch that's presented with stylish style.

exec.p. Michael Scott. p. Vonnice von Helholt, Michael Scott. d. Vonnice von Helholt. co-d./anim. Alan Pakarnyk. mus. Randolph Peters. ed./sd.ed. Ken Rodeck. A Prairie Region production. 5 mins. 35mm/16mm/VHS/Beta/3/4.