

## Convergence deals with substance

MONTREAL — Convergence II: Transcending the Hardware is "a conference in evolution that adapts to the evolution of new visual technologies," says Barbara Samuels, co-organizer of this four-day event to be held at the Sheraton Hotel in Montreal, Dec. 8-11.

"Two years ago television and film were separate industries. Today, they are both united on vertical and lateral levels," says Samuels who is promoting Convergence II on the strength of the success of Convergence I: Demystifying Technology held in 1984.

Although the title has changed, the basic format of the conference (four days of panel discussions, seminars and demonstrations) and the philosophical orientation of the conference towards understanding the new visual technologies and their impact on the motion picture, television and video industry, remain the same.

No fewer than 110 guest panelists from around the world have confirmed their participation in Convergence.

Among these guests are director Robert Altman (U.S.); Jean-Jacques Beineix (France), director of *Diva* and *Betty Blue*; Les Brown, editor of *Channels Magazine* in the U.S.; Pierre Juneau, president of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation; Richard Fox (U.S.) president of Fox Theatres; Jo Bergman (U.S.), vice-president of film and video at Warner Bros. Records; Laurie Anderson (U.S.) filmmaker and performance artist; David Samuelson (U.K.), author and industry consultant; Rovario Pacini (Italy), head of research and development at Sylvio Berlusconi's Fininvest Communicaizone.

Morning and afternoon panel discussions will feature topics like Signal Wars: Cultural Sovereignty and the New Technologies, Delivering the Goods: The Future of Theatrical Film Exhibition, CineHolography, Visual Literacy: The Writer and the Moving Image, Controlling the Image: Dramatic Lighting for Tape.

The Cinema/TV Conver-

gence and The British Creative Crossover is one of two panel discussion topics that will feature key persons in the U.K. film and television industries. The panel will develop a case study on the linkup between industries.

"The tone and color of the conference is changing," says Samuels, explaining that the convergence of film and television is redefining the roles of filmmakers, politicians, producers, distributors and how they must relate to one another within the industry.

Convergence II is presented in collaboration with the Department of Communications, the NFB, the Quebec Ministry of Communications, Telefilm Canada, CBC and La Société générale du cinéma.

Le Forum Vidéo de Montréal Inc. which produces Convergence is a nonprofit organization. The directors are Barbara Samuels, Suzanne Hénaut, Isabelle Juneau, Francine Fournier, Paul Cadieux, Larry Lynn, Jacqueline Dinsmore and Réal Gauthier.

## Losique challenges Toronto figures

MONTREAL — Serge Losique, the founding director of Montreal's World Film Festival, continues to call to task the Toronto Festival of Festivals over what he claims are inflated attendance figures.

With Toronto attendance figures released to the *Montreal Gazette* (Nov. 12) corroborated by Leonard Schein, former Festival of Festivals director (see story), Losique claims that the Festival of Festivals had half the patrons it claimed in 1986 or 115,493 compared to 263,000.

"The maximum capacity they had was 200,000 seats in 1986 and they reported earlier that they had 90 percent attendance," Losique told *Cinema Canada*.

The Montreal newspaper also reported figures from a theatre by theatre print outs showing 82,908 in attendance in 1985 compared to official attendance, given that year, of 231,000.

Official attendance at the Montreal World Film Festival in 1986, according to Losique, was 251,123 and 230,000 in 1985.

Explaining his reasons for his public denunciation of the integrity of the Festival of Festivals organization, Losique

told *Cinema Canada* that he could no longer restrain himself.

"We have in the past always refused to compare or comment on the Festival of Festivals," says the outspoken Montreal festival director, "but this time they have gone too far."

Failing to speak out, says Losique, would have been tantamount to not defending his beloved Montreal World Film Festival which he started 10 years ago.

"In fact, they are claiming to be the most well-attended film festival in North America which is like saying that Montreal doesn't exist. They should be ashamed and embarrassed for telling the biggest lie in Canadian cultural history," exclaims Losique.

Attendance figures are one of the factors used in determining the size of the grant to the film festival from Telefilm Canada.

However, Peter Pearson, executive director of Telefilm Canada, told *Cinema Canada* that funding criteria is based on a review of the festival's financial statements and the integrity of the festival. There is no criterion, he says, that requires a precise accounting of

attendance.

"We are not a policing organization," says Pearson, who adds that Telefilm will not investigate Losique's claim of inflated attendance figures in Toronto.

Neither does Losique believe Telefilm should investigate. He has, however, informed the board of directors of the Festival of Festivals that failure to admit that the figures were padded will force him to take the matter to the Department of Consumer and Corporate Relations.

When asked by *Cinema Canada* why he thought the Festival of Festivals might pad attendance figures, Losique replied that the motivation was a sheer sense of competition with the Montreal World Film Festival.

"They are lying because we were the first to show our figures. Asked what harm could come by padding attendance figures, Losique said: "They will cause damage to themselves by getting caught in their lies. The most honorable thing they can do now is face the facts."

"If one day they beat me in gate attendance," says Losique, "I will be the first to congratulate them."

## Legal Eye: New deal, bad deal

Michael Bergman considers the new agreement in Quebec from the point of view of the English-language distributors and concludes that Jack Valenti of the MPEAA got what he wanted in English-language distribution by sacrificing foreign-language films to the Quebecois.

He concludes his analysis with the following: "Maybe it is time to re-think the feasibility of Canadianization of film distribution. After all, if the MPEAA members can blunt a law duly passed and primarily directed against them, what else can be done; except compete? If the Canadian distributors will not or cannot compete, the Canadian film industry will have to build on the existing film distribution system and find its place in the larger American film network."

## Departures afflict Telefilm

Can the agency lose five senior executives in two months and still operate effectively? What is causing the departures and how will they be stemmed?

With the departure of Operations executive André Picard, co-production boss Ronald "Pete" Legault, distribution head Anne Brown, business affairs manager Gwen Iveson and the transfer of Toronto chief Bob Linnell to London, things are going awry at Telefilm. To boot, the corporation has yet to find a director of Communications, and Josée Miville-Dechene is suddenly not returning after her maternity leave.

## Caplan-Sauvageau needs cost analysis

The new head of the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture, Jim Edwards, weighs-in citing the need for a financial analysis of the recommendations of the Broadcasting Task Force. As the man who must oversee the report's consideration in parliament, Edwards' opinion matters.

## CTV ready to increase Cancon for Commission

Long before the reported "out burst" of CRTC chairman André Bureau about CTV's commitment to Canadian content, *Cinema Canada* has the network on the record offering to increase the volume of its Canadian programs.

## Work stoppages halt three films

In Quebec, the union scene is heating up with work stoppages as producers and technicians fail to reach agreement after the last collective agreement ran out in 1979. Recent events are reported in two separate articles.

## ACTRA poised to bring animators into union fold

The last of the non-unionized film workers, animators are talking to ACTRA, principally as a result of the frustrations of working with the National Film Board. A long report gives all sides of the debate.

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