

### Smith to top Famous post in QC

MONTREAL – The controversy surrounding Roland Smith's sale of the Outremont Theatre was temporarily forgotten at a recent press conference when Smith, in his new role as vice-president of Cinémas Unis/United Theatres, outlined extensive theatre renovation plans for Quebec.

As senior executive of the Quebec wing of the Famous Players theatre chain, 44-year-old Smith has been given *carte blanche* for all booking and operation policies. Joining Smith as assistant to the vice-president is Carole Boudreault, former director of distribution for Les Films René Malo.

Smith told his audience at Montreal Sheraton Centre that new management is fully conscious of the specific nature of English and French-language film audiences in Quebec.

In a renewed effort to win the patronage of both language groups Smith said Cinémas Unis promises: to strengthen relations with distributors of Québécois and foreign French-language films; to bring out dubbed or subtitled versions originally released in a lan-

guage other than French as quickly as possible; to play a more active role in promoting Quebec-made films, and to prepare an inventory of short films from Quebec for exposure through its network of theatres.

Smith also took apparent delight in assuring his audience that repertory and art cinema in Quebec was alive and well and will be showing at Cinémas Unis theatres.

Cinémas du Parc, with three screens on Park Ave., will become The Bogart art cinema with one French, one English and one subtitled screen. The Capitol Theatre on St. Catherine Street East will become the Nouveau Cinéma, and the Kent will become the chain's west end repertory theatre. (The Capitol is next door to the only rep theatre currently active in the east end, the Ouimetoscope; the Kent is a few blocks from the only rep theatre in the west end, Cinema V.)

A dozen new screens are planned with two major changes in the immediate future being a multi-screen addi-

tion to the Parisien Cinéma in Montreal and a redevelopment of the Palace Cinéma also on St. Catherine Street.

Over 20 more Cinémas Unis theatres will be equipped with Dolby stereo in 1987-1988 and six theatres will be equipped to show 70mm films.

Cinémas Unis will publish two 40-page magazines (French and English) twice yearly, including a calendar of films for the art and repertory cinémas.

David Lint, a vice-president of Famous Players who attended the Montreal press conference with Jack Bernstein, president, and Walter Senior, chairman and CEO, announced that Ron Emilio, formerly of Cineplex Odeon, has been appointed senior vice-president of Famous Players as of April 27.

Lint estimated the cost of renovations and additions in 1987 – including a total of 26 new screens in Montreal, Mississauga, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Calgary, Brampton – at close to \$14 million.

### Fight for CKVU control

VANCOUVER – March 30 is the tentative trial date set to resolve the dispute between Daryl Duke and Izzy Asper over control of Vancouver Independent Television station CKVU.

On February 13, of this year, the CRTC approved transfer of control of the station from Western Approaches Ltd. whose principal shareholders are Daryl Duke, Norman Klenman and a company that was formed on March 1986 that is owned 50.01 per cent by Asper's Canwest Broadcasting Ltd and 49.9 per cent by Western Approaches.

The deal to transfer control to Canwest stems from a loan agreement which was made by the two parties when Canwest guaranteed a bank loan for \$4 million in 1979, and in 1982 forwarded the company another \$8 million. The agreement gave Canwest the option to buy out Western Approaches shares in the station, which Asper chose to do in 1984. The takeover has had a stormy protracted course, complicated by the presence of Charles Allard (owner of Super Channel and CITV in Edmonton) whose takeover bid

for the station in 1979 had apparently been the catalyst which caused Duke to go to Asper for financial assistance in the first place.

CRTC license approval was one of the conditions of the sale agreement but before the CRTC began its July 1986 hearings, the transfer of control was again being disputed by Duke and Klenman. An RCMP investigation into 38 allegedly forged letters of support for Canwest's ownership of the station put the CRTC hearing on hold for several months during the winter of 1986. By the time the CRTC approval of the sale to Canwest came through on February 13, 1987, Duke was claiming that it was a moot decision, as the agreement to sell had had an expiry date of Dec. 31, 1986. Asper contends that the deal stands, as the delay was caused by events beyond the control of either party.

While Canwest and Western Approaches have been cleared of any wrong-doing concerning the letters, an as yet unnamed individual is believed to be subject to charges of fabrication of evidence and obstruction of justice.

### \$4.6M offering for *Lance et compte*

MONTREAL – While the brokerage firm Midland Doherty Ltd. continues to take orders, hand over fist, on a \$4,600,000 public offering for *Lance et Compte/He Shoots He Scores II*, initial efforts to sell the first series of episodes to U.S. independent television stations have not been as successful.

A record-breaking 2.7 million viewer rating for the final episode of the first 13-part series on Radio-Canada, and relative popularity in the English-language market (CBC), do not guarantee immediate acceptance in the U.S. market, says Gerald Ross, in charge of sales of the series for Communications Claude Héroux Inc.

Ross told *Cinema Canada* that the initial foray into the U.S. market was met with a "cool reception" and that the Montreal-based production company is, as a result, looking for a U.S. sub-distributor.

"To make sales in the United States you really need an American (sub-distributor) who knows the territory, says Ross.

Syndication, as opposed to U.S. network programming is the most appropriate distribution venue for *He Shoots He Scores* which will have a localized appeal, says Ross, in areas throughout the U.S. where hockey is a popular sport.

Part of the initial U.S. reluctance to purchase the first series, says Ross, was the lack of a pilot episode and the use of composite scenes from episodes one, two and three. (The dubbing of the French-language version for CBC created wide-spread criticism in English Canada. An English-language version, starting with episode nine, increased the ratings from 770,000 for episode eight to 1,200,000 for episode nine). The fourth episode of the first series is currently being re-shot for use as a pilot in the U.S. market and at MIP-TV.

*He Shoots He Scores II* is currently on location in Switzerland, Finland and France and will be aired in January, 1988 for 13 weeks.

This second series, budgeted at \$11,614,000 is the subject

of a 4,600 unit limited partnership in a total offering of \$4,600,000 at \$1,000 per unit (minimum of 5 units).

The offer, which closes April 15, 1987, is the first public offering on a Quebec-made television series since 1980.

Doménico Vitale, investment executive with Midland Doherty says orders totalling \$3 million were written during the first week of the offering.

He says the popular appeal of the first series combined with limited risk on invested capital is what makes the offering so attractive.

An aggregate total of \$4,224,000 in financial participation has been agreed to by Telefilm Canada, O'Keefe Brewing Company Ltd., Ultramar Canada Ltd. and Canada Trust.

As well, agreements for co-production of the series have been entered into between the producer, TF1 (France) and SFP (France). The French financial participation is \$2,790,000.

Société Radio-Canada and CBC will pay \$1,625,000 and \$1,950,000 for five and four year Canadian television rights, respectively.

### Consternation in Ottawa

OTTAWA – Approval for a new Ottawa television station will have "serious consequences" for the CTV television network, one of the private network's affiliate companies has warned.

Standard Broadcasting president Alan Slaight said his company is considering an appeal of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications (CRTC) decision.

Standard owns CJOH-TV, CTV's Ottawa affiliate, a station that will be in competition with the new service.

The CRTC gave Toronto's Baton Broadcasting Inc. approval to operate a new English-language station, choosing it over four other applicants.

The new Ottawa service will not be affiliated with the CTV network even though Baton owns Toronto's CFTO station – the private network's flagship station. Instead, Nation's Capital Television Incorporated will be an independent station.

Slaight said the federal cabinet must consider an appeal within 60 days of a CRTC decision. The CRTC issued its

decision on the new Ottawa station March 2, 1987.

He said there are conflict of interest issues in the setting up of the new service.

"Unless the CRTC has a hidden agenda to destroy the CTV network I find their decision inconceivable," he said.

A press release from CJOH-TV states "It is a decision that has damaging implications for the structure of the CTV network..."

"The decision will have serious consequences, not only for CTV, but for all the local Ottawa television stations both English and French."

Spokesmen for Baton Broadcasting were not available for comment at press time.

Slaight said Standard Broadcasting outlined concerns at the CRTC hearing, insisting that it is the wrong time and wrong place to add a new television station. With the television industry under such economic stress, he said such a move would have been better left for a couple of years.

"No station should have been licensed, but if they were

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## Emilio moves to Famous spot in Toronto

TORONTO – A senior executive from Cineplex Odeon Corporation has joined the ranks of rival Famous Players Limited.

Ron Emilio will become senior vice-president – film for Famous Players having left his job as senior vice-president – film with Cineplex Odeon.

Emilio, whose appointment takes effect April 27, 1987, comes to Famous Players with 37 years experience in film distribution and exhibition.

"I have worked in all aspects of the film industry and I know that Famous Players is held in high regard by those involved with the business and by the patrons who attend movies in the chain's theatres," he said in a company statement.

The 54 year-old Emilio ran Citadel Films, his own distribution firm, from 1979 to 1982.

Before that he spent seven

years as vice-president with Allied Artists and previously worked with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, first as general manager and then as vice-president.

As well, Famous Players has promoted two long-time employees as regional vice-presidents of booking.

Sixty-year-old Herbert Black, who joined Famous Players in 1952, will become vice-president, booking – west. Joseph Strebinger, 44, who has worked at Famous Players since 1964, will become vice-president, booking – east.

Walter Senior, Famous Players' chairman, said the Canadian movie house chain has a wealth of film industry experience and intends to provide audiences with the best movies and theatres available.

"The addition of Mr. Emilio to Famous Players' management and the promotion of Mr.

Black and Mr. Strebinger will clearly signal our intentions regarding the future of this company," Senior said.

Famous Players' president Jack Bernstein said the changes will help the company remain Canada's leading theatre chain.

## Cable clan

MONTREAL – The 30th annual convention of the Canadian Cable Television Association will be held in Montreal's Palais des congrès, May 3 to 6.

Communications Minister Flora MacDonald is the keynote speaker with an opening address by André Bureau, chairman of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission.

Representatives of the 430 CCTA member organizations will meet with industrial and political leaders to discuss the future of cable television in the 1990s under the banner "New Perspectives" – the theme of this year's convention. CABLEXPO, an exhibition by leading equipment and service suppliers will feature over 170 booths.

"The focus of the convention," says Bill Allen, publicity director for the CCTA, "will centre on how technological advances in the industry will match consumer demands."

Packaging, pricing, news services, cable's place as a competitive part of the home video market are several key topics.

Other timely topics will be a review of cable regulations, the Caplan-Sauvageau review currently underway and a specialty services applications with a CRTC deadline set for March 12.

## Record profits for Cineplex

TORONTO – Cineplex Odeon Corporation has announced record financial results for 1986 with profits of more than double the year before.

Cineplex reported profits of \$31,579,000 from revenues of \$500,615,000 for the 53-week period ended Dec. 31, 1986.

The \$31.6 million in profits last year compare to \$12,504,000 in profits from revenues of \$170,852,000 for the 52-week period ended Dec. 26, 1985.

Cineplex explained it used a 53-week period for its last report because it is changing its year end to match the calendar year.

Basic earnings per share for the Dec. 31, 1986 period were \$1.04 compared to 77 cents for the 52-week period ended Dec. 26, 1985.

The Cineplex balance sheet shows the Toronto-based exhibition chain received \$322,956,000 in admissions for the 53-week period ended Dec. 31, 1986. Other sources of revenue for the same period include:

- concessions – \$100,186,000;
- distribution, post-production and other – \$43,256,000;
- income from theatre property sales – \$34,217,000.

Theatre operations cost Cineplex \$362,239,000, while cost of concessions and theatre properties sold, depreciation and administrative costs are the other expenses.

## Radok takes top prize for Taming

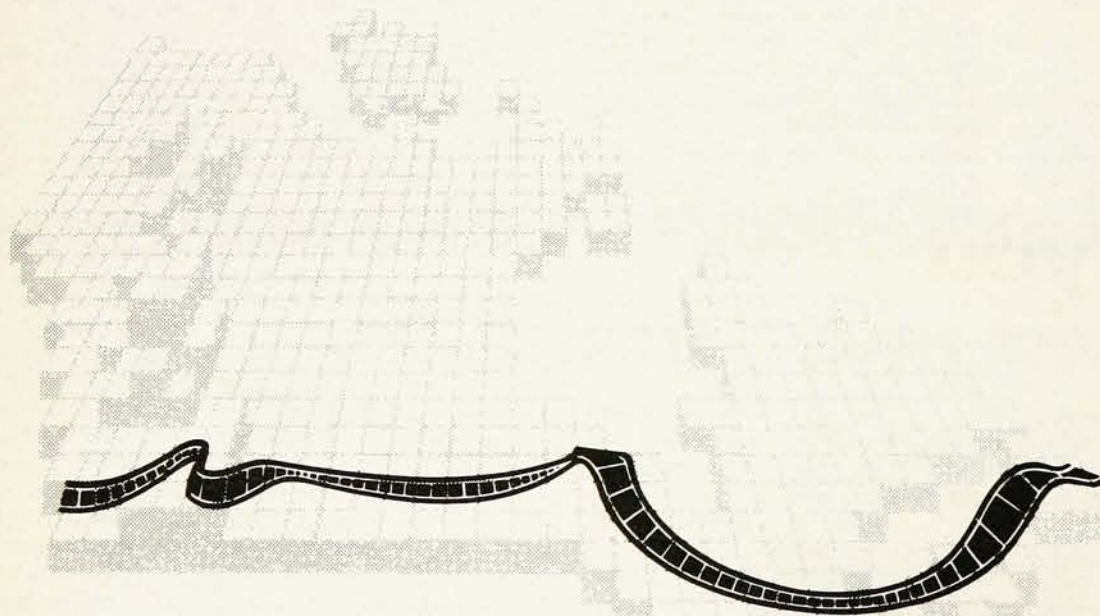
VANCOUVER – *Taming of the Demons*, directed by Emil Radok, is the Outstanding Canadian Film Achievement of Expo 86.

This audio-visual presentation, shown on nine screens at the Canadian pavilion, is the choice of the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television for the special award.

The film traces the evolution of communications from primitive times to the present day. Director Emil Radok is well-known for his *Laterna Magika*, a theatre and film presentation at the Czechoslovakian pavilion during Montreal's Expo 67 (see *Cinema Canada*, No. 132)

MONTREAL – Helen Shaver will co-star opposite Donald Sutherland in *Bethune: The Making of a Hero*, a Canada-China co-production to begin shooting in China on April 13 for 13 weeks.

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