

SHOOT ALBERTA

by Stacey Bertles

The Alberta Motion Picture Industry Association's (AMPIA) 13th annual awards celebrated the achievements of local filmmakers. Anne Wheeler could probably build a wall out of the A-shaped trophies by now. **Loyalties** picked up prizes for Best Drama over 30 minutes, Best Director (Dramatic), Best Performance for Tantoo Cardinal, Best Script (Dramatic) for Sharon Riis, and, not surprisingly, Best of the Festival.

Editor Peter Svab won a double award for his work on **Long Lance**, a National Film Board documentary, and **A Sick Call**, a NFB/Atlantis half-hour drama. Those two productions scooped up the lion's share of awards. **Long Lance** netted "A"s for Best Documentary, Best Director (Non-Dramatic) to Bernie Dichek and Jerry Krepavech, Best Cinematography to Jim Jeffrey, Best Script (Non-Dramatic) to Dichek and Donald Bretton, Best Musical Score to Roger Deegan, and Best Overall Sound to Gerry Wilson, Jerry Krep, Don Paches, and George Terrant. **A Sick Call** was voted Best Drama under 30 minutes for producer Dale Philips, and Jay Smith got the nod for Best Performance (Actor).

Other awards included: Best News and Public Affairs to Sat Kumar (CBC Calgary) for **Pockets of Prejudice**; Best Motivational to Fred Epuntain for **Radiation Safety**; Best Educational to Michelle Syirling of ACCESS (educational) TV, Best Commercial to Michael Hamm (Frame 30 Productions); Best Musical/Variety to CRFN (Edmonton) for **The Guitar**.

Peter Campbell's Dreamland Picture Co. netted awards for **Synergy**, an Expo film about a ballerina in Fort MacMurray's tar sands plant (Best Short or Vignette) and his promotional film **The Alberta Energy Advantage**.

Richard Hudolin and Ted Kuchera were honoured for Art Direction on Wendy Wacko's **The Climb**. Special jury awards went to **Beyond The Bend in the River** (produced by Rossi Cameron) and **Close to the Heart** (produced by Shona Rossel). AMPIA also recognized young talent in Southern Alberta Institute of Technology student Richard McNeal. McNeal produced the Best Amateur Film, **Hot Air**.

Awards ceremonies generally only interest the people involved — but the quality of both projects and personnel in the industry is recognized well beyond the limits of the province. Anne Wheeler wasn't at

the ceremony because she was in New York for the New Director's festival. The judging panel included British Columbian Sandy "iz-great-beeg-thrill-to-bee-here" Wilson; Robin Jackson of the federal department of Communications; and Derek Mazur from Manitoba. David Scorgie, the Alberta Culture rep who chaired the jury, said that there was an accord between members. "It was remarkably easy to judge the winners. We had no big disagreements this year."

The strength of the film community here is reflected in events like the AMPIA awards and less formal ones, like the monthly Brown Bag Screenings. They've been well-attended from the beginning, both by producers and techs. Interest from government agencies has been increasing. Right now, virtually every production organization in the province has or will be formally participating.

Organizations in other provinces are drawing on the local community to enrich their own events. Ian Red and the mayor of Yorkton, Saskatchewan came to promote the Yorkton film festival at the AMPIA awards. They've invited Marcella Bienvenue (who won an award for experimental film at last year's AMPIA awards) as a judge and panel expert to Yorkton this year. Bienvenue is executive director of the Calgary Society for Independent Filmmakers, and an "inter-media" artist in her own right.

Reid also announced that a short film by local up-and-coming filmmakers Frances Damberger and Lars Lehman called **The Road to Yorkton** will be showcased this year.

Centrally-based production companies are moving out west, too. Atlantis has been producing short films through NFB offices for several years. **Hamilton's Quest** television series was produced through a conglomeration of companies last year. Now Alliance Entertainment Corp. announced that production on **The Gunfighters**, a two-hour television movie, starts in late May.

Gunfighters heralds the agreement producer Allan Stein made with Alliance a little over a year ago. The film is a "high-action drama" written by Jim Byrnes and starring Art Hindle, Tony Addabbo, and Reiner Schoene. It's the pilot for a weekly half-hour series slated to premiere on Global Network in the fall of 1988.

Allarcóm co-productions brought projects to Alberta

and B.C. for shooting. Now reps say that **Stone Fox** marks their move into locally-based productions. They're starting a casting pool out of the Edmonton office and are "negotiating" on several projects.

In the meantime, even inde-

pendent television stations are being introduced to the Alberta Industry, via the CITV-hosted Pan-Pro festival. Whether they were drawn by visions of a Truck Stop theme room at West Edmonton Mall's Fantasyland Hotel or André

Bureau's remarks about Canadian programming remains to be seen. Registration is up from last year. Over 250 stations representing what CITV rep Heather Grue says is "basically everyone who's not CBC" attended April 4-7.

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