

FRONTS WEST

by Calvin Wharton

Now that the British Columbia Film Fund has been approved by Cabinet, the local film community is waiting for Bill Reid, Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Culture, to choose a board of directors. One of the board's first tasks will be to establish guidelines and program details. The province may set up an arm's length agency to determine who will receive funding, and how much each project chosen will get from the first year's \$2 million budget. The ministry seems to be moving fairly slowly on this project, but maybe it's just the time of year.

CBC has licensed, from Vancouver's Primetime Productions, three half-hour segments of **Comedy College**, a comedy game adapted from the live show (of the same name) at Expo 86's Canada Pavillion. The program was created by Colin Yardley and Jeff Groberman, and is written by them along with Phil Savath. Executive Producer, Michael Lebowitz, says the project has gone ahead with joint funding by Telefilm and the B.C. Comedy College.

Ryan Stiles, a tenured professor at the college, will host the program with regular guests such as Dave Cameron, Peter Anderson, Janice Ungaro, Bryan Myers, Meg Soper and Roger Fredricks. The shows will feature improvisation competitions, "joke-offs", and audience participation.

Northern Lights Media has launched a more orthodox game show, called **Second Honeymoon**. Produced through facilities at BCTV in Vancouver, the series will be broadcast in Canada and the U.S.

As well, Northern Lights producer Stephen Foster says their feature film project, **Max Glick**, is now fully funded and will begin pre-production in Manitoba at the end of September. Foster says this film, to be shot in Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie, is the first to be made with the backing of the Cultural Industry Development Office and Film Manitoba.

And in a venture even further from home, this production group has sent a crew to Gilgit, in Northern Pakistan, to shoot another development film for the Aga Khan Foundation (they're previously done four).

The recent agreement which provides for Telefilm to contract services from the National Film Board on feature productions will apply only to the re-

gional offices, not to Montreal or Toronto, says Barbra Janes, the B.C. regional director of the NFB. Details are still being worked out, and it may be a while before the program is in

full operation.

Meanwhile, the Film Board here has several films in various stages of production, many of them aimed at the educational market. These include three films on sex education by Mo Simpson, director of **Feeling Yes, Feeling No**, and a 20-minute drama for kids by Peg

Campbell, titled **Bombs Away**, which deals with fears of a nuclear holocaust. In final editing is Colin Browne's **White Lake, or The Making of Canadians**, an 80-minute experimental film about landscape, narrative and memory, shot near Penticton, B.C.

Last November Janes became

B.C. region head of marketing and production, the first time both responsibilities have been combined. She hopes to have integrated premises by next February (presently, she divides her time between the two

MULTIPLE CHOICE IN TORONTO

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I'm shooting my next production in Toronto because ...

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b. Production budgets buy more in Toronto.

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d. Toronto Film Liaison provides a comprehensive service that is fast, efficient, and free.

e. ALL of the above.

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offices, located in different buildings).

CBC Vancouver is interested in doing several more episodes of **Blue's Folly**, the first of which aired last fall in the Lies From Lotusland series. Bebob Pictures is working from their im-

pressive start with writer, Nora Kelly, Blu Mankuma in the title role, and director, John Newton.

At the end of September, Women in Focus and the Australian consulate in Vancouver will co-host an evening of new work in film by Australian women. The films are from the Australian Film Commission

Women's Unit (the equivalent to the NFB's Studio D). One of the highlights of the program is Julie Cunningham's **Double X**, an animated short with rap dialogue that makes fun of early human society and sex-role stereotyping.

Also, in October, Women in Focus and the Goethe Institute are co-sponsoring an evening

of film and discussion on new German women's cinema with German critic and curator, Renate Mohrman.

One facet of B.C.'s maturing film industry is the appearance of new companies designed to take advantage of the increasing amount of local film activity.

The Beacon Group, a motion

picture investment business which will provide venture capital for Canadian certified features, is now beginning to look for investment possibilities. Grant Allen, director of their Vancouver operation, describes the group as, "a private version of Telefilm with broader parameters." Allen says their primary interest is in features shot in B.C. but they will also fund some films made outside the province and have a network across the country.

They are looking for features with six out of ten Canadian points with production budgets between one and five million dollars and distribution guarantees at 50 percent of the investment. Allen claims they will provide 15 to 30 percent of the total budget - what he calls gap money. "We have a mutual fund concept," he says, "with our investments to be spread over a number of features."

Another new enterprise is Gastown Productions' film processing lab which will be operational by January, 1988. This will provide Vancouver with a second post-production facility. Local industry growth indicates the new lab won't be short of work.

Praxis Film Development Workshop is in the process of selecting scripts and inviting guests for its fall workshop. They expect Paul Cox will spend a day a Praxis while he is in town for the Film Festival.

Meanwhile, the New Play Centre is finishing the third of three projects accepted in the "Test Tape Competition."

Already shot and posting are the first two script selections - **Serenade Bay**, written by David King and directed by Joan Juliani; and **Shelter**, written by Stephen E. Miller and directed by Peg Campbell.

The third script, **Star Crossed**, was co-written by Glenda Leznoff and Sylvie Fefer, and directed by Nick Kendall.

High profile for Vancouver Fest

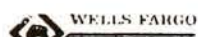
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hosted by Jay Scott (*Globe and Mail*), which is open to the public, on October 26.

And the Air Canada Canadian Tribute evening, October 24, hosted by Brian Linehan from CITY-TV in Toronto, will honor Helen Shaver for her contribution to the international film industry.

"We're going to present an event in Vancouver that the city can be proud of," says Fisher. "We have an absolutely stellar collection of films, critics and remarkable guests - very high-profile."

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