

All key players at MIPCOM for strong television sales

MONTREAL—The closing of the London Multi-Media Market (Nov. 6, 1986) has added to the importance of the MIPCOM television market (Cannes; Oct. 16-20) and to the fortunes of close to 24 participating Canadian companies at this year's event.

Canadians offered over 3,000 hours of programming — four times what was offered last year. And the general consensus is that sales were strong at MIPCOM which is said to be a more accessible market, with close to 6,000 in attendance this year, than the larger MIP-TV which averages close to 10,000 persons.

Crawley International's **The Nightingale**, a half-hour animated special co-produced with the Shanghai Animation and Film Studio, China, was sold to BBC, Canal Plus, Australia, Italy, Greece, Finland, Norway and Denmark. New markets were opened by the Ottawa-based animation house which also acquired 45 hours of programming for distribution in a co-venture with the New York-based Pride Entertainment Co.

Nelvana's Neil Court reports that major European sales were

made by the company's new distribution arm. Aside from firm sales of **T and T**, **My Pet Monster** and **The Care Bear Family**, Nelvana entered into negotiations with a French-European partner to co-produce the **Babar** series and a **Babar** feature film. An announcement was expected before the end of November.

Court, who left Telefilm Canada to join Nelvana just one week prior to the market, says the closing of the London market in 1986 has raised the profile of MIPCOM this year.

"It has become a more focused market attracting all the key players," Court told *Cinema Canada*.

Ironstar Communications entered into negotiations with a new, privately owned Pay-TV operation in South Africa to sell all 100 episodes of the comedy series **You Can't Do That On Television**.

Derek McGillvray of Ironstar says many of his suppliers find it easier "and more palatable" to deal with private interests in South Africa than with state-run services.

"I stand in the middle between suppliers and buyers and

have been told by some suppliers, not all," says McGillvray, "not to sell to South Africa."

Joy Rosen of Sullivan Films reports a brisk business with the sales of **Anne of Green Gables** to Canal Plus and NRK (Norway). **Anne II** (the sequel) was sold to Latin American television. **The Prodigious Hickey**, a three-hour mini-series, was sold to the U.K. and Home Video in Scandinavia.

"We were there for the first time and didn't know what to expect," says Rosen. "But we found that the buyers were very serious about doing business and were not just kicking tires."

Visual Productions announced a pre-sale to Narvesen television (Norway) for a new feature entitled **Rough Dia-**

monds currently shooting in Africa. A package deal of several feature titles was sold to Japanese Home Video.

Sales of **The Wonderful Wizard of Oz** and the French-language version, both made by Cinar Films, were closed in such territories as Singapore, Africa, France, Switzerland, and Luxembourg.

G. Ross Tele-Distribution Inc. sold the first 13 episodes of **He Shoots, He Scores** to Holland. Confirmed but not signed is the sales of 28 episodes to each of eight countries in South America.

Ross told *Cinema Canada* that a sale in "the toughest market in the world" could take the form of several episodes edited into features.

"This is just an idea we're

working on," says Ross, who adds that U.S. buyers are primarily interested in their own (U.S.) product. He says he will continue to try and crack the pay-TV market south of the border.

Cole Palen's Flying Circus, a documentary carried by Films Transit, was sold to National Geographic and PBS (as a second window) and to the Scandinavian countries. A half-hour comedy entitled **Le Gros de la classe (Fat Chance)** was picked up by the U.S. Nickelodeon Channel, Canal Plus, Holland, Belgium, Sweden and Norway.

"MIPCOM has become a full-fledged and full market," says Jan Rofekamp of Films Transit,

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MIPCOM Sales



who notes the closing of the London market has given impetus to MIPCOM.

Filmooption of Montreal reports sales of **Nordic Fauna** to the U.S. Discovery Channel. **Cirque de Soleil** was sold to Sweden and **Wrestling** was bought by Greek Home Video.

Cinevisa International has confirmed sales of **Scouts!** to Sweden, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Belgium. **Amazon**, a one-hour documentary, was sold to Belgium and the U.K. **The Gift**, a one-hour drama, was picked up by Swedish television. **Jane Siberry - I Muse Aloud**, a music special, was sold to Sweden and Finland.

While at MIPCOM, Cinevisa announced the co-production of a children's series entitled **Simple Stories**, a series of 12 X 7-minute animation shorts. The partners are Les Producteurs (Paris, France) in conjunction with the Quebec-based Multimedia Group.

Also announced by Cinevisa is a production deal with SFP (France) and Portman Productions (U.K.) for 2+ half-hours of the **Max Haines' Crime Flashback** series. Pre-sales have been made in European and British markets.

Ralph C. Ellis Enterprises sold **Baby Animals** to France and Italy while Isme Bennie International sold the award-winning **Degrassi Junior High** to the U.K. Home Video (Screen Entertainment) and to Israel. The **Sports Cartoons** animated series was sold to Sweden, Iceland, the Middle East, France, South Africa and the U.K.

Other Bennie sales include **Worlds Apart** to Singapore, **Great American Mystery Cars** to the Philippines, a **Neil Young Special** to Sweden and **Peter Ustinov's Russia** to Algeria.

"It was a strong market - a lot of business was done," says Bennie, who has participated in the market since 1983.

The **Bradbury Series** was the most sought-after product carried by Atlantis International, according to Ted Riley, who reports pre-sales in European and Far Eastern markets. Besides acquiring distribution rights for all of TV-New Zealand's product, Atlantis has signed a four-year distribution deal

with the Leo Burnett Agency to sell **A Child's Christmas in Wales** on behalf of the McDonalds Corporation.

Thomas Howe and Associates of Vancouver sold **At The Beach**, a teen series, to Nickelodeon pay-TV while a new Canadian distribution company, The Producers Group, made its debut at the market with the

sales of **Wok With Yan** (over 100 episodes) to U.K. cable. The Canadian made-for-TV feature **Crossbar and Dreams of Glory**, a 30-minute pre-Olympic show were sold in several European territories. Six specials were picked up for distribution by The Producers Group.

Also at the market for the first

time was the Toronto-based Lightscape Motion Picture Company which entered into an agreement-in-principle with Kingsway Film Distributors Ltd. (Australia) for the acquisition of **Descent Into Darkness and In Fashion**. This agreement also includes the half-hour drama series **Adventures in Mind**.

Via Le Monde announced the production of the second series of **Cover Story (Point Chaud)** with Gamma-TV and Radio-Québec. This series has been pre-sold to Japan and Germany. The Montreal-based company also announced the production of **Children of the World**, a series to be shot on five continents in 1988.

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→ bought and sold. It was not to be.

A few days earlier on May 4, MacDonald had met with the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Communications and Culture and discredited any possibility of a Canadian-wide boycott by the U.S. majors.

MacDonald said she did not have to answer to anyone outside of Canada and that her government had a commitment to

introduce legislation shortly. On May 8 and 9, during the House of Commons Question Period, she restated this commitment.

By this time, the free-trade debate was permanently situated on the front page of most Canadian newspapers and occasionally on the back pages of the odd U.S. daily. When asked in the absence of Flora MacDonald whether the ways and means committee of the

U.S. Congress had called the proposed legislation an impediment to free-trade, Pat Carney, minister of International Trade said that the Americans had overreacted and that legislation will be introduced.

Thus, there was hope that legislation would be introduced for first reading prior to the summer recess of the House of Commons (June 30-August 11).

Despite explanations of gov-

ernment legislative priorities, problems with tax reform and legal technicalities in the drafting of the Bill – and despite repeated assurances from MacDonald – there seemed to be a consensus throughout the Canadian film industry that legislation had been politely shelved for the duration of the free-trade talks which raged behind closed doors through the summer to its fateful conclusion at midnight Oct. 3, 1987.

Mifed welcomes Canadians with record sales

MONTREAL – Canadians reported far-reaching sales at the annual MIFED 1987 (Oct. 26-Nov. 5) in Milan, Italy.

Jan Rofekamp of Films Transit in Montreal concluded a four-picture deal with Channel 4 which includes the films *Sonatine*, *Marie s'en va t'en ville*, *It Can't Be Winter Because We Haven't Had Summer Yet*, *Le Lys cassé*.

These Quebec-made films will be part of a 12-film Canadian contemporary feature film series to be aired by Channel 4 in 1989. Among other films being looked at by Channel 4, says Rofekamp, are *The Decline of the American Empire*, *Anne Trister*, *Family Viewing* and *Train of Dreams*.

Aska Films reports sales of *The Kid Brother*, winner of the Grand Prize of the Americas at the 1987 Montreal World Film Festival, to France, Italy, Iceland, Switzerland, Greece, Belgium, Taiwan, Korea, Israel and Bahrain.

Simcom International concluded package deals with a number of countries. The most popular titles were *Switch in Time*, *Blindside*, *Hello Mary Lou (Prom Night II)*.

Cinema Plus International announced sales of *Un Zoo la nuit (Night Zoo)* and *Train of Dreams* with France, Switzerland, Greek Home Video. A major deal for *Un Zoo la nuit* was finalized with Japan.

The SC Entertainment Corporation announced that it reached a total sales of \$12.5 million (U.S.), mostly in pre-sales, for domestic and foreign rights to its seven-picture package.

Image Organization's Pierre David announced that the film *Pin* was sold to Japan, Australia, U.K., West Germany, South Africa, Switzerland, Holland, Norway and Denmark. *Babar: The Movie* went to West Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Greece, Israel, Mexico, Singapore and South Africa. *The Care Bears in Wonderland* sold throughout Europe as did *Crazy Moon*.

The René Malo film *Les Portes tournantes (Revolving Doors)*, scheduled for completion in January, was sold to West Germany, France, Australia, Switzerland, Belgium, Portugal, South Africa and Israel.

Vancouver-based Modern Cinema Marketing concluded video deals with Greece for *Deadly Intruder* and *Ticket to Heaven*.



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NEWS

NFB LINKS UP WITH READER'S DIGEST

In its debut into the home video market, Reader's Digest has turned to the National Film Board for material. This month 70,000 Canadian households will be offered the opportunity to acquire *Norman Summer*, one episode in the 13-part series *Canada at War* which was produced in 1962. An initial order of 900 cassettes have already been shipped to the magazine. This historic series of half-hour films has continued to be a popular product over the years and is now available in its entirety on video cassettes.

NFB ATLANTIC PRODUCER HONOURED

Rex Tasker founder of the NFB's Atlantic production centre and its first executive producer is the recipient of this year's Pioneer Award presented by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation at the recent Atlantic film festival held in Halifax. Mr. Tasker who stepped down as executive producer in 1981 to return to producing NFB films was cited for "his pioneer work in the film industry in the Atlantic region."

NFB RECEIVES TEN GEMINI NOMINATIONS

The National Film Board has won ten nominations for this year's Gemini Awards of the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television. Nominated as the year's best documentary program is *The Champions part III: The Final Battle*. Director Donald Brittain also earned a nomination for best director of an information or documentary program or series for the same



• Victoria Snow nominated for best performance by a lead actress.

film. Brittain was also nominated for best writing in an information/documentary program or series for *Tommy Douglas: Keeper of the Flame*. In the category of best picture editing in an information or documentary program or series, the Board took two nominations; one for *The Final Battle* edited by Richard Bujold and Roger Hart and one for *After The Crash* from the *At the Wheel* series edited by Judith Merritt. Sharon Riis has been nominated for best writing in a dramatic program or mini-series for the Board's *The Wake*, an episode in the series *Daughters of the Country* and, for best director in a dramatic program or mini-series a nomination went to Norma Bailey for *Ikwe* also from the *Daughters of the Country* series. Victoria Snow was nominated as best actress in the

same category for her role in *The Wake*. *Lucretia*, directed and animated by Heidi Blomkvist, has been nominated in the category of best animation program or series. The awards honouring English-language television will be presented December 8-9 in Toronto.

VIDEO DISTRIBUTION CONTRACT

The NFB has signed an exclusive retail distribution contract with the Calgary-based distributor Canadian Video Factory. The initial contract gives the company the right to 47 National Film Board titles. Video Factory deals primarily in alternative video product lines focussing heavily on educational and children's programming.

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