



David Cronenberg behind the camera

photo: Attila Dory

CFDC. Delaney's response was fine! I liked it. It was silly but it's too bad he couldn't have had that reaction and understood that it was a valid thing for a film to do to someone, rather than denying it and pushing it away.

"Surely it's obvious that there should be room for every kind of film from every possible country – I mean anything that disturbs you is not Canadian. It should be nice and somewhat serious if it's Canadian; that's the same old bullshit which has produced so many deadly films. Where else but in Canada do you get a critic not attached to a daily newspaper who is more conservative, more reactionary than a government body like the CFDC? Where else do you get a critic who quotes Judy LaMarsh for his definition of art?"

"He doesn't understand catharsis, and that's what the film can do: it's a release of inner tension to get involved with a film like that and have it end the way it does. That was partly my aim, both publicly and personally. During the three years that I wrote the film my father was dying and we were very close. It was a quite horrible death, no reason for it, it was just bad. No consolations, whether metaphysical or philosophical or whatever. But it's not necessary for people to know about my father. If the film touches some people in the same way, then it's working perfectly relative to their own lives, and that's what the film has done for a lot of people.

"To exist is not necessarily a wonderful thing, and the source of life can certainly be violent and ugly."

It's the old story, really. Whenever you discuss a movie, especially one in the exploitation genres, there are those who will read deeply and those who dismiss quickly. But Cronenberg admits he's made a 'movie', as opposed to his earlier films, *Stereo* and *Crimes of the Future*, and insists that it can operate – must operate to be successful – on both levels. And *The Parasite Murders* has been successful: it's paid back its \$165,000 investment, been sold to

Delaney's Dreary Denegration

It seems to me that one of the fashionable things to do in the intellectual circles in Canada is criticize the Canadian Film Development Corporation. I am somewhat amazed with this phenomenon, not having been born here. Mind you, this Canadian attitude of super criticism of all things Canadian prevails not only with regard to filmmaking, but generally speaking, we find this in all the arts. There are the critics and the enlightened few who constantly and systematically denigrate what is made in Canada. It seems that nothing is good unless it is absolutely perfect and without blemish. It's a good thing we don't have diamond mines here, because if we didn't find a Kohinor every day, in these critics' eyes our mining industry would be worthless.

Some of you might have missed a film article by Marshall Delaney in the September issue of *Saturday Night* magazine. In a seething attack against the CFDC for having invested in *The Parasite Murders* Delaney illustrated the typical Canadian critics' syndrome. I think that Mr. Delaney's article is an untrue representation of the facts, shows questionable judgment, is vile and vicious, and most of all, very opportunistic.

Personally, I am very proud of *The Parasite Murders*. I am glad we made it, and I think it is a very good film. Done on a modest budget, it received a very good reception from both filmmakers and film buyers when shown in Cannes. It was shown at the Edinburgh Film Festival at a gala performance, and in October it will be shown in competition at the Sitges Film Festival in Spain. The film has been sold all over the world and will have its premiere next month in Asia, Europe, and North America. It is a thrilling and violent science fiction film, and I don't think I really have to defend it. I am certain that it will find its public in Canada and elsewhere.

I write not so much to defend the film, nor to reply to Mr. Delaney's criticism, but to point out the dangers of trying to hold the CFDC accountable for each and every investment that it makes. The CFDC is not the Canada Council of the Arts. Its purpose is to create a Canadian film industry. I think that in the case of *The Parasite Murders* it has certainly made not only a wise investment financially but has also come up with a most interesting work. I regret that there are not more films like *The Parasite Murders* being made.

I think we have to create an atmosphere for the CFDC wherein it can, once it is adequately funded, intensify filmmaking in Canada. We are not going to achieve anything with senseless criticism of the CFDC. A great number of tax dollars are dispensed in Canada for various forms of subsidies, investments and aids. I personally am very unhappy that certain magazines, which in my opinion are neither viable nor worthwhile, benefit from government grants. A good number of us probably object to eating subsidized eggs that are not that well kept. I guess some of the critics are also served films not entirely to their liking.

Let us not forget that there are a great number of successful Canadians in the film world who are prospering, and it is perhaps no coincidence that they are not in Canada. Do we have to send all of them away?

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