Don Shebib's

The Climb

Don Shebib has come a long way since his triumphs with Goin' Down the Road and Between Friends in the early '70s. Since that time, Goin' Down the Road has consistently been listed as one of the 10 great Canadian films, and Shebib carries it around with him rather like Orson Welles used to carry Citizen Kane. It has become both a blessing and a curse. A source of pride for those committed to the notion of a distinctive Canadian cinema. Goin' Down the Road lingers as a reminder of a great talent gone to waste.

In over a decade, Shebib has directed only four features, the last one being Running Brave with Robbie Benson in 1983. Disputes with the producers caused Shebib to withdraw his name from that film, which had only limited theatrical release. Since then, he has been active in TV, mostly directing episodes of The Edison Twins, Night Heat, and Danger Bay. Shebib's struggles with the Canadian industry and the CFDC (now Telefilm) have become as famous as his earlier successes.

The Climb, his latest foray into feature filmmaking, is an old-fashioned piece of macho action-drama. It stars Canadian-born Bruce Greenwood from the hit film, which had only limited theatrical release. Since then, he has been active in TV, mostly directing episodes of The Edison Twins, Night Heat, and Danger Bay. Shebib's struggles with the Canadian industry and the CFDC (now Telefilm) have become as famous as his earlier successes.

The film's final sequences cover a Vancouver-based group who have bombed and sabotaged Canadian military-industrial targets. But unlike other forms of terrorism or armed struggles depicted in the film, the Vancouver group raises an interesting distinction -- their targets, rather than people or innocent victims, are military installations and weapon sites. As Shebib illustrates, these are anti-war militants really terrorists?

Today, military arms and production have become the world's largest industry ($800 billion annually). Governments, many of which have been active in promoting and support wars. The American Constitution, itself a much-heralded example of justice, guarantees the right of individuals to bear arms. This mass proliferation of weapons has made violence an intrinsic tool in relations between people and states. Unlike the title of Shebib's film, arms and violence have not become less prevalent, just a last resort. Rather, as EN DERNIER recours effectively depicts, they've rapidly become an effective first choice for those both in and out of power.

Robbie Hart •


bat became an obsession with the Germans after it claimed the lives of 31 members of a German climbing party in 1932. The script concentrates on Hermann Buhl (Greenwood), a famed mountaineer whose reckless and determined ambition leads him into conflict with the team's bureaucratic leader, Dr. Karl Herrligkoffer (James Hurdle). Whereas Herrligkoffer is climbing for the glory of the German nation, Buhl climbs for himself and the mystical challenge of the mountain.

As they proceed slowly up the icefields, news arrives of Hillary's conquest of Everest. Disappointed and confronted with rebellious porters and dwindling supplies, Herrligkoffer decides to retreat before making it to the top. Buhl disobey's orders to return to base, camp and makes the final assault alone, without oxygen or support. After a full day's climb, exhausted and hallucinating, he makes it to the top. Unable to climb down in the dark, he has to spend the night there, keeping himself awake in freezing temperatures. His survival is a credit to his fierce determination, and in the context of the film, miraculous. The ghost of one of the dead climbers helps him down the mountain the next day!

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In the folktale, the youngest son or, in this case, daughter leaves home and goes to seek her fortune. After many trials and tribulations she wins out and gains happiness with the city. In Marie s'en va-t-en ville, Marie is treated with the same directorial care and attention.

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take her child back and assume the burden of love and responsibility this entails.

There is a similar theme in this movie. Sarah is also alone, living a sterile, unloved and unloving existence. It is through caring for Marie that she comes to realize this and, at the end of the film, we are led to believe that she will give up this way of life.

The film is about two people in need, meeting, fulfilling each other's needs and furthering each other's growth. Marie is very naive and believes she will give to realize this and, at the end of the film, comes to terms with the reality, which surely suggest this possibility and here.

Sarah's make-up, jewelry and clothes, which surely suggest this possibility and there is a similar theme in this movie. This series of wigs that Sarah wears. She is no longer young and attractive, and when the villain of the piece (a pimp I presume) snatches off her wig, she looks naked and pathetic. It is at this point too that Marie realizes that Sarah is a prostitute. That fantasy fades and Marie must come to terms with the reality, which she does easily enough for such an innocent. I suppose that her previous experiences with Sarah have prepared her for this. But, I find it hard to see it this way.

Sarah seems to be taken altogether too lightly in the film. Especially repellent is the scene where Sarah runs out to turn a trick so that she can buy some fancy clothes for Marie. Godard used prostitution as a metaphor for how we must all sell our souls and lose its tragic implications. It is true that Sarah is redeemed through her love and care of the young girl, as in High Tide, and I suppose that these films might signal a need in our society. Maybe women have come to realize the emptiness of too much freedom. After the return to the mother is feministic theory, perhaps we'll get the return to the mother is feministic theory.

**Mary Alemany-Galway**

**MARIE S'EN VA-T-EN VILLE**

*Marie s'en va-t'en ville*, directed by Françoise Lepage with the collaboration of François Borin, Pierre Bogot, Michelle Lanthier, Jacques Leduc, and Marie Lépine, is partly funded by Radio-Canada and it will fit nicely into their schedule.

*Marie s'en va-t'en ville* is also alone, living a sterile, trivialized by a light-comedy approach. Perhaps one should see this film as a feminist theory diluted for mass consumption. The film is partly funded by Radio-Canada and it will fit nicely into their schedule.

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