

## Telefilm announces restructuring

*Overcommitment reduced*

MONTREAL - In an ongoing attempt to reestablish control of its own financial situation, management practices and administration, Telefilm Canada has restructured its operations, returning to an organization similar to the one used under André Lamy's administration.

There is still no sign of a new executive director to replace Peter Pearson, who resigned on Oct. 16 1987; however, a short list of candidates is being prepared by the consulting firm of Stevenson and Kellogg and an announcement is expected by mid-April.

Interim executive director Michèle Fortin has announced the appointment of Peter Katadotis as the interim director of production and development.

Katadotis, who will continue as the director general of the English Program Branch at the National Film Board (since 1985) will fill this interim position for a two-month period.

Among his duties will be the management of the Broadcast Development Fund and the Feature Film Fund previously handled by Linda Beath, former executive in charge of operations and business affairs, who has been retained by Telefilm as a consultant to senior management.

Telefilm's reorganization plan divides all Telefilm activities among four sectors.

Although she has been appointed as director of Strategic Planning and Policies, Judith McCann, deputy executive director of Telefilm, has resigned as of April 1, 1988.

Another deputy executive director, Louise Beaudoin is now the director of the Markets sector.

Yves Beauchesne is in charge of Financing and Administration and Denise Melillo is the director of Communications and Public Relations.

Fortin calls the reorganization of the federal film funding agency a "streamlining of activities, a decentralization and clarification of client relations and an improved relationship between administrative functions and the management of funds." Ten positions within the new sectors remain to be filled.

It has also been announced that Bill Gray is the new manager of the Telefilm Canada office in Vancouver.

Gray, an entertainment lawyer and writer/actor/producer/director for radio and television will succeed Wayne Sterloff who left Telefilm in October. Bill Niven has been the interim manager.

The reorganization of Telefilm was approved at the last meeting of the Telefilm board of directors on Feb. 4 in Vancouver.

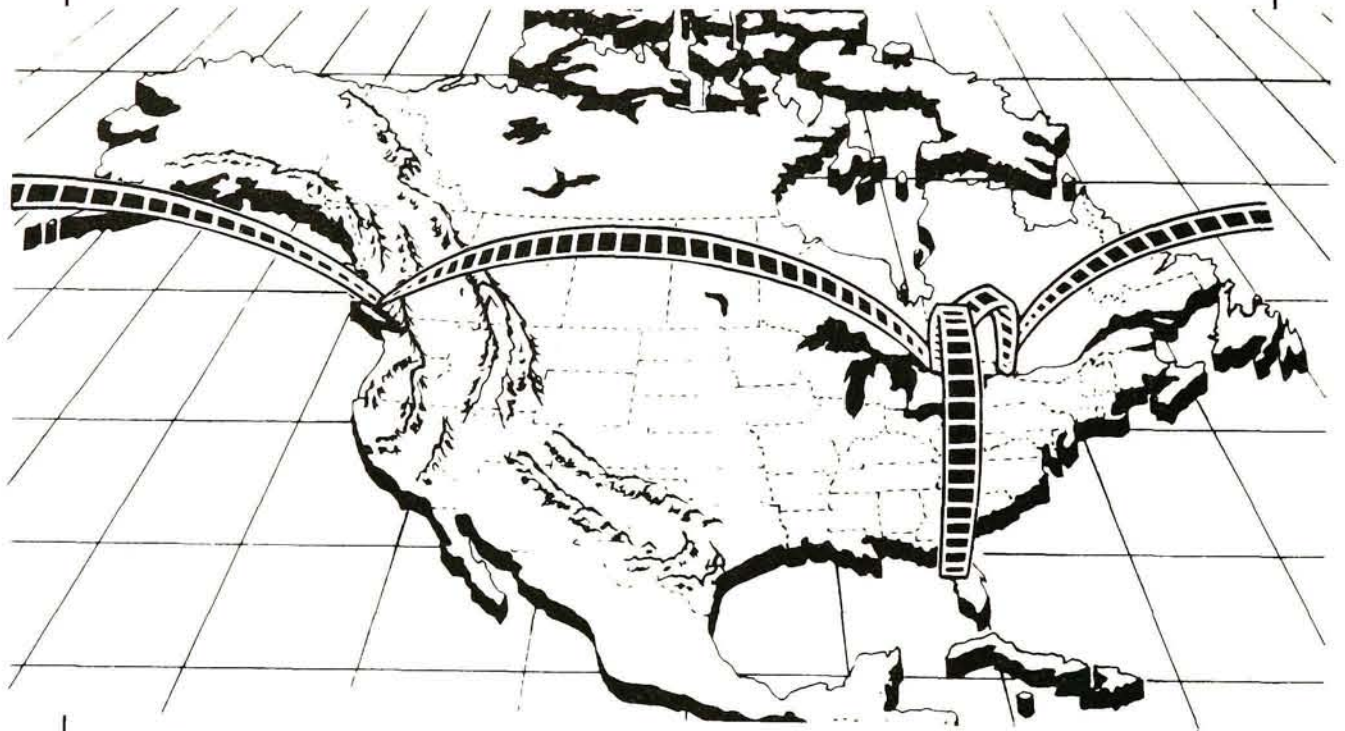
Fortin, an associate of Le groupe CGI Inc., was hired in November to reorganize Telefilm with colleague Roch Bolduc.

In the dizzying realm of finance, Fortin has recently informed Communications Minister Flora MacDonald that what once was a \$48

million over commitment of television and film funding in fiscal 1987 has been reduced to \$30

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million.

A accounting report (Thorne Ernst and  
Whinney) released last October by Telefilm

revealed that Telefilm had, by Sept. 30, 1987,  
committed itself to spending \$163 million - \$48  
million more than its fiscal 1987 budget of \$115

million.

However, in a letter to Flora MacDonald,  
dated Feb. 19, Fortin says "we are confident we

can complete this fiscal year with minimal  
impact on next year's funds."

"... our most recent analysis indicates that  
we will be in a position to expend funds available  
in our 1987-1988 budget by the end of the fiscal  
year. In fact our priority over the next two  
months is to ensure maximum payments on  
signed contracts and to finalize contracts for  
projects already accepted."

The letter indicates that Telefilm expects to  
reduce the \$48 million of commitments  
anticipated as carryover to 1988-1989 to an  
"acceptable level" in the range of \$30 million.

### Katadotis hotly contested

MONTREAL - The two-month interim  
appointment of Peter Katadotis as director of  
production and development at Telefilm Canada  
has raised an angry protest by producers across  
Canada.

No sooner had the appointment been  
announced on Feb. 17 by Michèle Fortin, the  
interim executive director of Telefilm, when the  
Association des producteurs de films et de vidéo  
du québec (APFVQ) had fired off a letter to  
Fortin objecting to the appointment of  
Katadotis.

Rock Demers, president of the APFVQ, told  
*Cinema Canada* that the 80-member producers'  
organization lacks confidence in Katadotis to  
administer the Broadcast Development Fund,  
the Feature Film Fund and the Interim Financing  
Fund for both English and French-language  
productions.

Demers says the APFVQ letter states that  
Katadotis lacks the experience in the private  
sector to work closely with producers.

"There is nothing he can bring to the job that  
can be of any use," says Demers.

"When he looks at a budget, he will not be able  
to read it because he does not know how to  
produce a film. At the NFB you don't learn that  
because they work with a different kind of  
structure."

There is also concern among the APFVQ  
membership that Katadotis leans too heavily in  
favor of documentaries and that, as a result, the  
production of feature film and television series  
will suffer.

The National Film Board has confirmed that  
Katadotis will remain in his position as director  
general of the English Program Branch and  
Telefilm has confirmed that the interim  
appointment is for two months starting in  
mid-February.

Fortin has stated in a letter (Feb. 25) to various  
associations within the film industry that the  
position of director of production and  
development - part of a restructuring of the  
senior administration at Telefilm - "will not be

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filled immediately" and that Katadotis has accepted the position until a new executive director is appointed.

The interim appointment is necessary, explains Fortin, "as the requirement for coordination is particularly crucial in the next months."

A strong objection levelled at Telefilm by both the APFVQ and the Canadian Film and Television Association (CFTA) is that neither association nor the industry at large was

consulted about the reorganization and appointment at Telefilm.

"Telefilm had promised us on several occasions to confer with the industry prior to a reorganization and an appointment of senior management," says Sam Jephcott, CFTA executive director.

Jephcott says regional producers across the country have informed him of their disapproval of the appointment.

John Ross, chairman of the CFTA, has gone on record as saying that Jean Sirois has lost the confidence of the industry by breaking a promise to consult the industry and by hiring Katadotis.

Consequently, the CFTA has asked for the resignation of Sirois.

At press time, Katadotis could not be contacted for comment.

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## Maple Leaf abroad

TORONTO — Boasting impressive credentials and an unmistakable symbol, Canadian television distribution has a new international face.

Maple Leaf Worldwide Distribution is the result of a four-partner venture that will attempt to connect Canadian television programming with world markets.

The partners — Ron Hastings Communications, Pat Ferns' Primedia Entertainment, Richard Price's RPTA/Primetime (U.K.) and D.L. Taffner/Ltd. (U.S.) — aim to eliminate the middlemen in current foreign sales, and "provide a profile" for Canada in world television markets.

"When we call on international broadcasters and they hear the word Maple Leaf they'll know exactly what we're about," said Ferns.

Maple Leaf will be involved in both foreign sales and domestic syndication. It will deal mostly with completed programs, but will also pitch unrealized projects to the world.

Ferns, one of the two Canadians in the partnership, sees Maple Leaf as an opportunity for sometime competitors to work together on the world stage. "The formation of Maple Leaf is going to give the production community a better shake in the world community.

"I'm a great believer in competition and a great believer in partnership," he continued. "I thought I would reconcile the two."

The Canadian partners (Ferns and Hastings) will have a majority interest in the new company.

Some of the clients already signed with Maple Leaf include: Comedia Productions (a Ferns-Taffner partnership), Evergreen Racoons, Film Arts, John McGreevy Productions, and Les productions du sept avril.

Hastings said that although this is a new venture, some, but not all of the partners' existing Canadian product "will be folded into Maple Leaf."