



PHOTO: P. M. EVANCHUCK

Western cool with Len Corey, Dushan Mircovitch, Helene Lacelle, Jack Webb, Lisanna Garrett and Jacques Couillard

musicians that they could ride horses. So off we went to do a dream sequence in which Len, sleeping in a bar, is dreaming that he is in the Old West and the head of a gang of desperados. Well, the original plan was to copy a typical ride-fast, rein-in, shout and scream type of cowboy entry-exit, with guns blazing. Then, Len would wake up in the bar. Instead, I found out that none of these concrete cowboys could ride! They took the horses - two were afraid to get on, and the other two couldn't make the horses move. The young girls who were handling the horses had to take the reins and move them back and forth. It was a complete disaster, so I decided to rewrite the scene. We pretended that they had lost their horses and were fighting and yelling over each other's stupidity. The following weekend I found a couple of guys who could ride, and we did the scene as planned. Ironically, they were computer programmers. I can't complain, I got a short comedy piece from the other shots."

There are other hazards that Evanchuck has encountered during the shooting of *Cowboyz*. "I was shooting in the Raceway Tavern in Ottawa, a long-established haven for the skin trade, when one of the more aggressive prostitutes, obviously annoyed with what I was doing, broke a beer glass in my face. The manager grabbed her, knocked her out, and threw her out into a snowbank minus her shoes. I took myself off to the nearest hospital to have stitches put in. I now bear the scars of this encounter, but take it as part and parcel of my profession."

In what is becoming the Evanchuckian tradition, many of the cast and crew are from *Platinum*, and all are non-professional actors including the new faces in this latest venture: Len Corey, Dushan Mircovich, and Lizanna

Garrett. As Evanchuck points out, "Who's not an actor? I think it would take one hell of a lot of courage to be yourself all the time. So most people act in different situations. I just want to see them play those roles when I shout 'Action'."

One of the regular actors, Helene Lacelle, who plays Cleopatra in *Cowboyz* states that, "I enjoy working in something creative with dedicated people. It beats hanging out and trying on a new pair of shoes." The rest of the company echo the same sentiments. Jacques Couillard who played John Smith in *Platinum* and now appears as Johnny in *Cowboyz* says, "Let's say we're going to do a shoot at the restaurant where I work, The Bohemian, Evanchuck and the others will arrive a while before closing. We'll drink, then he'll sort of outline something that he's seen us do before but with some slight alterations to fit the scene. We'll walk through it, shoot it, and that's that." George Goracz, assistant camera and aound man for *Cowboyz* agrees with the team effort. "I even had a small part in *Cowboyz*. One of the actors didn't show up so Evanchuck had me walk through a shot and say a line, then I went back to operating the sound."

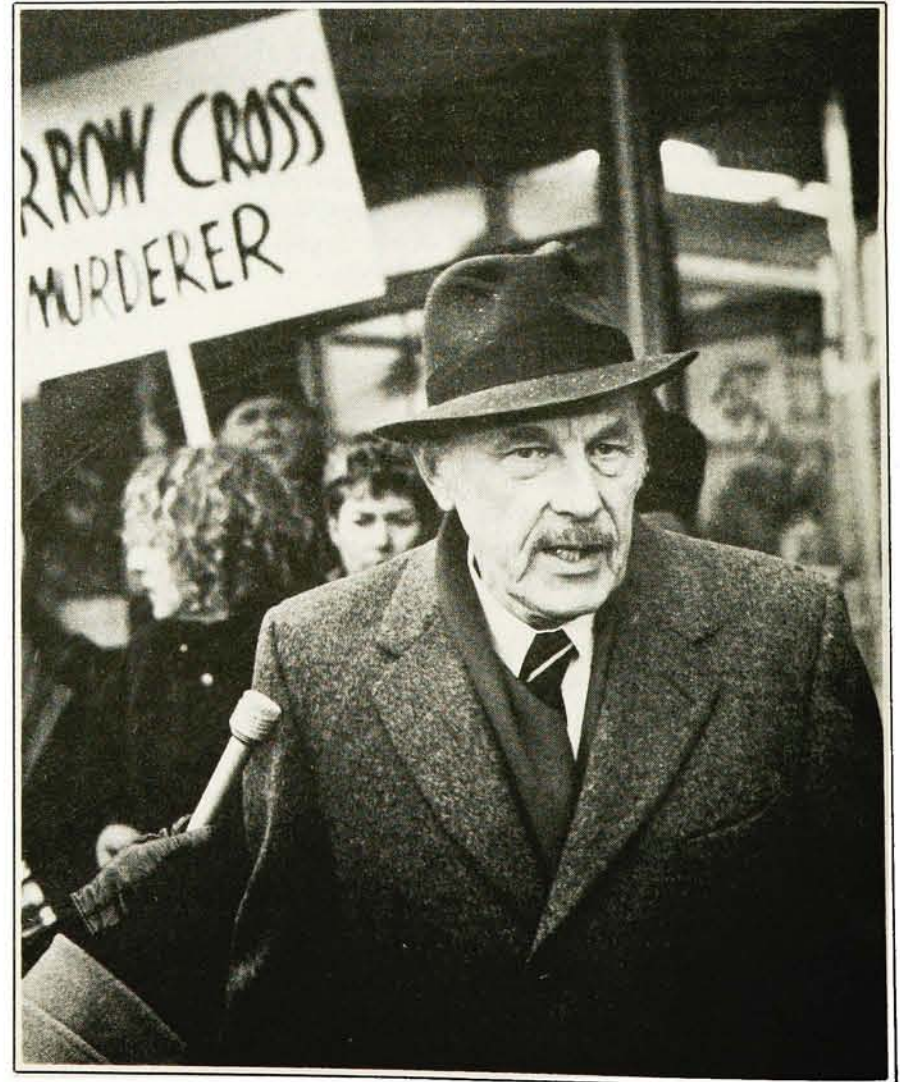
Len Corey, Ottawa's most photographed sidewalk musician, was taken from the street to play a lead character in the movie. "I've known Peter for years. We'd drink at the LaFayette Hotel or the Raceway Tavern together. One day he asked me if I wanted to be in one of his films. I said sure. Then about a week later, he shows up on the street where I was playing and starts filming. He tells me thanks, gives me some money then leaves. He did this a few times then finally asked me if I wanted a bigger part. I was sleeping in the mission or outside by the river. He offered to give me money each time. It was

better than what I got playing the sidewalks. Then he gave me a place to stay at his house. The movie is about me. About cowboys like me. Not the Old West ones but the real, modern ones."

Len, an itinerant street musician, has been playing the sidewalks for seven years after suffering the indignity of a messy divorce which resulted in the loss of all his worldly possessions, except his guitar. He feels he can't or doesn't want to return to his previous vocation. "My wife hated music, so I took it up full-time," Len says vindictively. "I got a job playing the streets so that she couldn't get any money from me. I'm not a welfare bum! I play for my money. I work for it!"

Serge Losique, head of the World Film Festival said in an interview in the *Montreal Gazette* that along with *Un Zoo, la nuit* and *Kid Brother*, *Platinum* was one of the successes of this year's Festival in Montreal. Ina Warren, staff writer for *Canadian Press*, in her article "It was a Memorable Year for Films in Canada," mentions Evanchuck as one of the most promising up-and-coming "New Wave" film directors. If the popularity of *Platinum* is any indication, Evanchuck's latest film *Cowboyz* is sure to make waves at upcoming film festivals.

W. Doug Allen •



No comment from Jan Rubes

Take two

Gordon Pinsent is thinking about hands. He leans against the refrigerator, in the basement of a Scarborough home full of television cameras, and talks to John Vernon. "If the hand is there and the face hasn't changed yet, that's the thing..." And later, as Martha Gibson walks into the bedroom and turns on a light, "I'm going to start this one with her at the lamp. Elaine Barna in the other scene turns off her lamp, and the very first thing we see here... It's the reach that does it."

The reach, the hand - these are perhaps the central symbols in Anna Sandor's TV drama *Two Men*, which Pinsent is directing. It is the story of a man who did not lift his hand against atrocity, and a man who, decades later, must decide for himself what his own action must be.

"This is going to be an important film," says Sandor. "Everyone came to the thing very committed... They're the best rushes I've ever seen."

John Vernon sings to himself as he puts on his overcoat, preparing to shoot a scene. I look over

the bookshelves of the home the crew has temporarily occupied. There are a number of inspirational Christian paperbacks and two copies of Igor Gouzenko's *This Was My Choice*.

Two Men is the story of Alex Koves (Vernon), who lost his family in Auschwitz, and of Michael Barna, a former Nazi bureaucrat (Jan Rubes), whom Koves believes is responsible for their deaths. Sandor, Hungarian and Jewish herself, sees this script as an exploration of her own past, especially her stepfather, "a very closed-up life, a very closed-up personality. I've always been fascinated by what happened that made him like that... (but) I wanted to do something that explored both the antagonist and the protagonist. These things are usually very black and white; I wanted to deal more in the greys, the pencil-pushers - what happens so many years after to someone... he didn't actually kill anyone, but someone who didn't fight back."

A make-up man sits, stoically knitting something beige, while John Vernon stands in the entranceway removing his overshoes. "(In this scene," explains David Webb, the assistant director, "he's just come back from seeing his stepmother Rose in the hospital. She said to him, well, try and become a Jew again, that's how you're going to beat this guy, you obviously can't go and kill him or something; so he had this sort of breakthrough there...")

"I've used sound a lot," says Sandor, "rather than flashbacks. The character will hear snatches, which don't always make sense to the audience until the end."

The mikes and cameras are precariously carted through the tiny suburban rooms, circling around sofas and an exercise bicycle. Scraps of conversation fly back and forth. "Where did all these Scottish accents come from?" asks someone.

"We're all Scottish here," says someone else.

A dark-skinned young man managing one of the cameras looks up. There is a slight glint in his eye. "Speak for yourself," he says firmly.

Maggie Helwig •



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