

FASHION 99

A riot of colour and a variety of techniques combine in this futuristic, tongue-in-the-cheek hit at fashion, which was a Genie nomination in the Short Film category this year.

It's 1999 and Orchid (famous fashion photographer), clad from head to toe in various shades of the current purple, is shooting decorated pears from every angle. A couple of them are labelled "Pears Cardin"... (and there are more excruciating puns!). The hard-edged Orchid chastizes her assistant for an absolutely wrong lipstick colour - "Pink Passion! Pink is passé" - and, having ruled, takes off for home via space shuttle.

On the way, Orchid's path is obstructed by definitely unfashionable people wearing slogan-boards and chanting horrid, nasty things - "Off with her boots!", "You are a prisoner of your clothes," "The clothes whore" - and affixing other undesigner labels. Finally making it to her antiseptic, but stylish, apartment, she prepares some well-designed food, making use of (wait for it... ) St. Laurent salt, Kenzon coffee, and Armani beans (that's enough!). After dinner, she watches a little TV, but "The Indigo Blue Show" depresses her with talk of "suffocating in fashion," and "cerebral fashionosis."

Poor Orchid doesn't sleep well - in a terrific nightmare her clothes coming out of the closet bent on revenge. This pixillated sequence is the best part of the film - scarves, ties and belts creep out of dresser drawers, and clothes and cosmetics fly on to the bed to attack the quivering victim. Orchid fights back, has to admit to cerebral fashionosis, and finally to Pink Passion.

An amusing romp, which must have consumed a lot of time and energy in its making. The costuming and design is imaginative, and the whole film has a bright and crisp look. The acting comes across as somewhat stilted and mannered (maybe that's what the filmmaker wanted) and, while some of the dialogue is funny and on the mark, the overall effect tends to induce a wince or two. The pixillation sequence is excellent (even if it does recall Warren Collins' *Musical Chairs*, an Etrog winner of the '70s, when chairs, tired of being sat upon, attacked their owner).

A film by Karen Firus. 15 mins (approx). col. 16mm/3/4". Sharron Kearney as Orchid. Dist.: Thomas Howe Associates, 1226 Homer St., Ste. 1 Vancouver, B.C. V6B 2Y8 (604) 687-4215.

TURNSTILE

Teenager Richie, out running, witnesses a car accident, and there's a lot of shouting. Later over lunch he tells his mother about it and says it was "like a real big explosion." Richie, who's off to see his grandfather after school, goes over the route he must take, while his patient parent listens and says that he worries too much about everything.

In the subway, Richie is fascinated by the turnstile and the people passing ceaselessly through it. At school the next day, he tunes out of a lesson and pores over old magazines from his grandfather, daydreaming about fighting in the First World War and troops leaping out of the trenches and going 'over the top'; then the turnstile clicks him through to the next war and it's 1940-41...

In the subway again, Richie has to force himself through the turnstile. Once again he's in strange territory - wandering through tunnels, seeing dishevelled, dirty and worn-out people, reminiscent of London's Underground during the Second World War when people lived and slept there during the Blitz. Richie runs and runs to escape, and is brought to a halt by a wire fence - and a turnstile beyond.

An extremely imaginative film; a good central mystical idea well-handled; and adroit use of archive footage of both world wars. However, having said that, the film falls down and fizzles out at the end. A quick dart forward into the future is badly muffed and difficult to comprehend - but the filmmaker is apparently now working towards clarifying the ending.

p. David Jenei. d. Jsc. Tim Wolochatiuk. cam. Yuri Yakubiv. ed. Stephen Butler. sd. Mike Lacroix. 18 mins. col. 16mm/1/2"13/4"

RATTLE (Nothing To Slaughter)

The Massey-Harris factory was built on King Street, Toronto in 1879. Its decay and demolition is investigated in this first-class documentary-experiment.

The camera roams over exteriors of buildings,

seeking out a sign, an ornamental concrete flourish of decoration, crumbling brickwork - and the freight trains pass by. Inside, machinery and discarded parts rust in the sunlight, all is mouldering and falling to pieces. The bulldozers and tractors move in, and the grabbers eagerly snatch up piles of brick and rubble.

This evocation of a mechanical past is accompanied by a superbly designed soundtrack that rattles, clicks and hums to provide the perfect background to the gritty black-and-white camera work. This assured little film, open to many interpretations and meanings, is a crafted and integrated whole, from its titles set in lead (linotype) to its fascinating treatment of sound blended from a combination of marraccas, chopsticks, baby toys, an Egyptian sistrum, bells, trains and vocals.

p.c. Working Title Pictures. A film by John Gagné and Jim Irons. 16mm. b&w. 8 mins. dist.: Canadian Filmmakers distribution Centre, 67A Portland St., Toronto M5Y 2M9 (416) 593-1808.

CHALLENGE & TRIUMPH: A PROFILE OF DONALD M. GREEN

Don Green is an entrepreneur and yachtsman from Hamilton, Ontario. He inherited Tridon, a small automotive parts company, from his father and set about designing a better windshield wiper, having discovered that all this North American business (and the patents) was controlled by just two family companies in the U.S. He then succeeded in marketing his new design to Ford Motors, at that time headed by Lee Iaccoca.

This successful and correct businessman has, however, always had a mad passion for the sea. At 18 he sailed 'round the world - and we see his home movies to prove it - and finally achieved the ultimate high of racing in the 1978 Canada's Cup in his specially designed boat "Evergreen." He's also competed in the gruelling Admiral's Cup / Fastnet Race off the coast of Cornwall, and the 1987 America's Cup.

This is a fairly ordinary, well-behaved documentary look at Don Green in his factory, in his office (what a clean desk he sits at!), and with his wife in their grandly unpretentious home. But, between the platitudes and careful phrases about his travels, his work, and the hair-raising politics of the yachting world, there are tiny

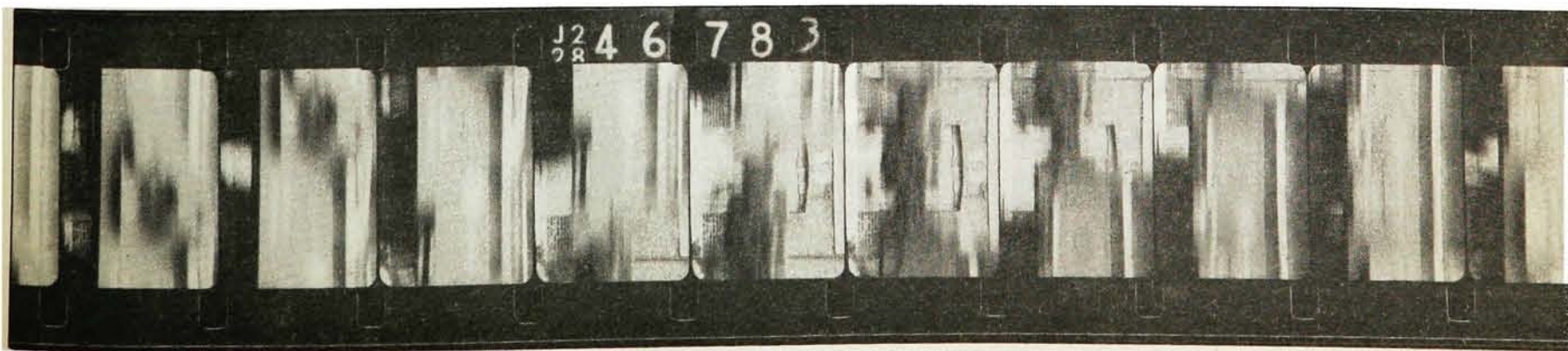


Donald M. Green

glimpses of the real Don Green (including an arm tattoo) - would that he had let the mask slip a bit more.

This careful film is juiced-up by some exciting footage from the Canada's Cup race and some of Green's other races, plus some acceptable home-movie stuff.

p.c. Great Canadian Productions. p./d. Luc P. Bourgon / Bert Bulmer. cam. Rhett Morita. ed. Andrew Kowalchuk. add.cam. Paul Sarossy. mus. Richard Gozdzialcki. narr. Elizabeth C. Moes. Assistance from Ontario Arts Council 16mm. 25 mins. col. dist. Great Canadian Productions, 225 Melita Ave., #2, Toronto M6G 2A1 (416) 534-6703.



Decay and demolition at the Massey-Harris factory in Toronto is explored in *Rattle (Nothing to Slaughter)*