

EDITORIAL

For the Sake of the Features...

This year the Canadian Film Awards have proven their importance. You may like the Etrogs or not, take them or leave them, it doesn't really matter. The Awards were important this year because they became a meeting place, a forum, a chance to discuss the state of the cinematographic nation and to think about the future.

Feature films are especially important, even crucial, to a developing industry and the feature film category presented problems this year as it had two years ago.

Due to the number of features made over the past two years a pre-selection was necessary; this pre-selection determined the quality of the features which were eventually presented to the jury in competition. Of the 25 features submitted, only 11 made it into competition; over half were eliminated. This year, as in 1973, the pre-selection has been severely and rightly criticised.

Two years ago the elimination of films like **Bar Salon** (because it was by a young director and in black and white) and **La tendresse ordinaire** created a furor among the Quebec directors. The pre-selection then, as in 1975, eliminated many of those films which strike out in new directions, leaving only the more 'commercial' films in competition.

In 1975, how does the pre-selection committee justify the elimination of **Montreal Main, Me** and **Recommendation for Mercy** which are serious, controversial Canadian films? Why was **The Hard Part Begins** withdrawn? How does the committee justify choosing those inane Hollywood copies **Child Under a Leaf** and **Quiet Days in Belfast**?

What this year's Awards show us is that, if a pre-selection is necessary, then the pre-selection committee is even more important than the jury itself. While the jury gives prizes, the pre-selection committee decides which films are offered to the public as representative of Canadian filming. They decide what, if anything, differentiates a Canadian film from one made in the U.S.A., and they decide which films will be promoted through screenings at the Awards.

Features need special attention until Canadians are able to make them well and market them correctly. Criteria should be established for the pre-selection. Perhaps the day will come when the scenario, the quality of performance and the director's temerity will count as much as a slick, 'made in Hollywood' veneer. When the pre-selection becomes representative of that which is best in Canadian filming, then perhaps the discussions can also include the technicians, the writers and the producers who work with the directors to make a film.

We have heard that all of the members of the pre-selection committee were from Toronto save two who came from Montreal. Is it unfair to suggest that the elimination of five features made in the Prairies and on the West Coast might be the result of Canada's own brand of Toronto-oriented provincialism?

The Alberta Motion Picture Industries Association and the British Columbia Film Industries Association are realities. Things are moving in the Maritimes. A Co-op and a chapter of the Canadian Society of Cinematographers have opened in Newfoundland.

It is time to reorganize the Awards so that they reflect not so much what filming has been in Canada but what it hopefully will become.

Operation Even Keel

One does not get involved in publishing a film magazine in Canada to get rich.

We got involved because we care about films as an important part of Canadian culture and about filming as a business enterprise. We also happen to be journalists who like to publish. Making a magazine is, of itself, a certain reward. This reward was sufficient for George Csaba Koller and Agi Ibranyi-Kiss without whom there would be no **Cinema Canada** today.

It's been three months now since we began to administer **Cinema Canada**; during these months three issues of the magazine have come out on time and been published within the budget we set up before we began. We are breaking even.

The salaries are still too low, there's no money for photography or commissioned articles, and there's a big cash-flow problem, but we can make ends meet and that's important.

Over the first years, a debt was accumulated. This happens with most small independent magazines. We inherited this debt. Hyde, Houghton and Co., in their auditor's report for the year ending April 30, 1975, set the deficit at \$10,011.

One thing that **Cinema Canada** can not do, at least not on its own, is to make a \$10,000 profit to clear this debt. Breaking even through the slower spring and summer months and upgrading the quality of the magazine when that becomes possible will take all the cash available.

So here comes Operation Even Keel. We'd like to pay off the debts and prove, over the first year, that our projections are correct, that **Cinema Canada** can hold its own.

Happily, we can continue to count on the Canada Council and the Ontario Arts Council for their help, but they can not give grants to cover deficits. This is where you come in. We will be writing to the members of the industry during the month of November.

We've looked at the industry and tried to determine what we might reasonably expect companies and individuals to contribute to the magazine. Given **Cinema Canada's** "charitable organization" status, donations are tax-free. Our goal is simply the \$10,011 we need to cover the old debts.

The range of gifts we are requesting go from \$10 to \$500. We've tried to work it out so that no contribution is disproportionate to the donor's ability to give. If the response is good, if you and others care enough, we can pay off those debts and never again trouble you with the boring (to you) but critical (to us) financial situation of the magazine.

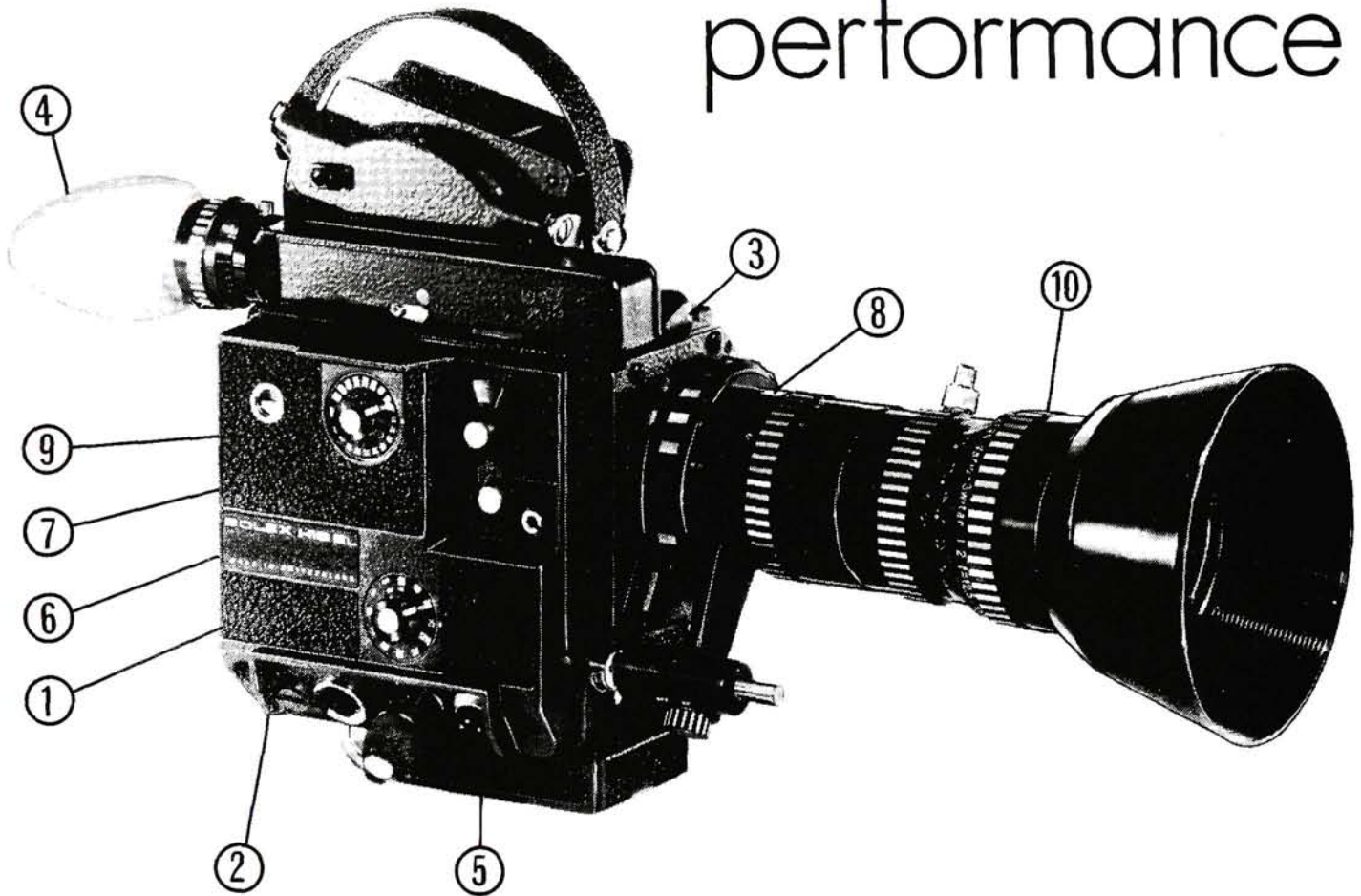
We said in our first editorial that we wanted **Cinema Canada** to become an open forum. We would like, so to speak, to give the magazine to each of you so that all can be heard, so that the film industry and those who like filming can use it to work out some of problems confronting that industry today.

Cinema Canada strives to be a good film magazine. That takes resources and time and energy. Helping us now is the best investment you can make towards keeping things on that even keel. It's not good for the magazine to have the editors wrapped up in fund raising. The time taken to solicit or to collect bills is time that doesn't go into improving the magazine.

If by chance you don't get a personal letter from us, don't feel left out. Your assistance will be welcome and we'll send you back a receipt.

Jean-Pierre and Connie Tadros

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