

## Prairies heat up as productions multiply

**S**askatoon scene: Saskatchewan FilmPool's Nora Gardner reports that rising rent and a decline in independent co-op production will result in the September closure of the Saskatoon office. However, Sask FilmPool executive director Brenda Owens will make periodic trips from Regina to monitor indie-activity and cater to the needs of remaining Saskatoon FilmPool producers. As well, equipment will be shipped-up as needed and/or stored in the home of an as yet unnamed co-op member. The only reported co-op activity in Saskatoon is Ian Preston's short film *Healing*, currently in post-production.

**Regina indie-activity dept.:** Regina is cooking! Brian Stockton's feature-length drama, *The 24 Store*, begins shooting this summer. Also, Gerald Saul (co-director of the wild and wacky *Wheat Soup*) is currently producing two shorts; *Angst* and *Doctor Watermelon and His Orchestra*. Richard Kerr's *The Last Days of Contrition* and Elaine Pain's *Dedication* are now complete. Sask FilmPool currently has six shorts in post-production and an additional three shorts will be shot this summer.

A Sask FilmPool tour of 10 Western Canadian cities is in the planning stages. The tentative start of this Saskatchewan independent showcase is late August or early September. An indie-filmmaker will accompany the two-hour package of at least one feature and several shorts.

**Sask workshoping:** The FilmPool is hosting an intensive three-day video production workshop August 12-14. The instructor is Vancouver's Sara Diamond. Nora Gardner says the workshop is geared towards an intermediate level for video artists wanting "to advance technically and aesthetically." Equipment, space and technical assistance are provided by Cable Regina.

**Yorkton loves milk dept.:** 26-year-old Winnipeg Film Group member Lorne Bailey scored two awards for his 20-minute black comedy *The Milkman Cometh* at the 24th Yorkton Short Film and Video Festival. Bailey captured the National Screen Institute Independent Dramalab Award and a Special Jury Award. Jury member Lawrence O'Toole hailed Bailey as "a regional filmmaker who shows great promise."

**Manitobans love Canada dept.:** The Winnipeg Film Group's 150-seat Cinematheque experienced a 100 per cent increase in box office during its spring "Films for Fish" series. This is especially impressive considering that the series boasted 60 per cent Canadian-content (with 50 per cent of that devoted to Manitoba product). Features screened included Alberta-produced *Storm* and Manitoba's own *Tales From the Gimli Hospital*.

**Speaking of Gimli dept.:** Manitoba's Icelandic community is in an uproar over Guy Maddin's *Tales From the Gimli Hospital*. Media reports in the Winnipeg papers and CBC's "As It Happens" reveal that Icelanders are offended at how their culture and heritage are being portrayed in the 72-minute black-and-white black comedy. Such grotesque items as squeezing fish guts over a head for hair gel and the theme of necrophilia are just a few items that have caused numerous Icelandic-Manitobians to cry foul. Maddin's defense is that he himself is Icelandic. "I can do whatever I want," he said.

**Location Manitoba:** Canada-Manitoba Cultural Industries Development Office (CIDO) locations officer Alana Langelotz has been scouting Manitoba prairies locations for Handmade Films and American Filmworks \$6 million feature *Another World*. Langelotz describes the project as a cross between *Stand By Me* and *My Life As A Dog*. Other CIDO location scouts include Simcom/Norstar's *Cold Comfort* (looking for two snowy weeks just outside Winnipeg this December) and Spectrum's Films' *Northern Lights* (considering a Northern Manitoba shoot in the winter or spring of '89). Price-tag on the latter pic is in the \$5 million range. Langelotz cites Manitoba's unique landscape and extensive period locations as being a major draw for feature shoots. CIDO's involvement in scouting "is starting to build substantially," said Langelotz. Shoots requiring a combination of above-mentioned attributes with snow, can also look to Manitoba with a keen eye. However, the province's usually predictable sub-zero climes went awry last winter during Tri-Star's *For Keeps* shoot. Unexpected balmy weather forced producers of the Molly Ringwald adolescent-pregnancy pic to order-up man-made snow.

**CIDO production news:** A number of productions receiving CIDO support are now complete or in post-production.

CIDO film officer Carole Vivier reports that Curtis Jonnie and Don Marks' Native Multi-Media Productions' one-hour special *Indian Time* is currently being hustled by the producers in Los Angeles. According to Vivier, the special's co-star (and former *Barney Miller* regular) Max Gail "has opened

some doors" in the American marketplace for the two producers. The variety special also features Buffy St. Marie and Charlie Hill.

CIDO's Jimmy Silden just caught a private Vancouver screening of Stephen Foster and Richard Davis' \$2.5 million feature *The Outside Chance of Maximilian Glick*. Shot in and around Beausejour and Winnipeg, the flick received raves from Silden who cited superb performances and remarkable period detail. Silden found the picture to be both "warm and funny" and praised all concerned.

Dueck Film Productions and Cambium Film and Video co-venture *Einstein Tonight* had its world premiere June 21 at Winnipeg's Centennial Concert Hall. The one-hour drama, dealing with Albert Einstein's brief encounter and warm friendship with a 10-year-old native girl, will soon be aired by CBC Manitoba and TVOntario. The gala Winnipeg premiere was sponsored by the Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University.

John Aaron Productions' \$300,000 half-hour drama *Cowpunk* is now in post-production. Directed by Kim Johnson, it will air on CBC's *Family Pictures*.

Greg Hanec's long-awaited feature *Tunes-A-Plenty* will receive its World Premiere sometime in August. Hanec's last feature, *Downtime*, was screened three years ago at the Berlin Film Festival.

A World of  
Lighting Innovations from

LTM



LTM Corporation  
of Canada

1665 Enterprise Road,  
Mississauga, Ontario  
L4W 4L4

TEL. : (416) 672-5464  
or 1-800-387-3990

FAX: (416) 672-2688

Paris Nice  
London Hollywood  
Florida New York  
Chicago