

Chercover watches his health, and CTV's

TORONTO - Murray H. Chercover, president and chief executive officer of CTV Television, says excellence in television broadcasting is as elusive as good health... to stop pursuing it is to lose it.

Chercover, age 59, says he is in good health and The International Council of the National Academy of Television Arts and Science seems to agree.

Chercover has just been appointed a lifetime "Fellow" by the council, of which he was a founding director in 1967.

The council with its international representation was established to pursue excellence in television broadcasting. Its Emmy Award is one of the more prestigious television awards in the world.

On the state of television programming today, Chercover says: "The creative quality has taken giant steps through the years. Technology is next with many social and economic implications."



He says the creative distinctiveness of television as an emerging art form has been apparent for many years. The most recent creative trend, he maintains, is the adaptation of visual symbolism, more music and other video aesthetics.

Chercover's other appointments include vice-chairman of the General Assembly of the Prix Italia Television Festival; founding

director of the Children's Broadcast Institute; director of the Roland Michener Foundation; director of the Board of International Advisors, Banff Television Foundation; founding member of the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television.

He is the recipient of the Canadian Association of Broadcasters Distinguished Service Gold Ribbon Award.

Mehes at Atlantis

TORONTO - Del Mehes, long a presence in Canadian film and television production, has left Nelvana Limited to join Atlantis Films as assistant to executive producer Peter Sussman.



"I'm closer to the productions, and to the kinds of productions that I have a lot of faith in," Mehes told *Cinema Canada*, "closer to where the action happens."

Mehes, who was Michael Hirsch's assistant at Nelvana, has been in a position to witness the maturing of the industry in Canada. She started out working for *Cinema Canada* in the 1970s, then moved to Raymond International before she arrived at Nelvana. More recently, Mehes served as production secretary on Peter Shatalow's *Blue City Slammers*.

"What I enjoy is watching the people who have progressed within the industry," she said. "When I started out, Atom (Egoyan) was still a student."

Beitel's sweet reward despite others thrashing

MONTREAL - Garry Beitel says winning a Golden Sheaf Award for Best Promotional Video at the Yorkton Short Film and Video Festival is twice as gratifying in a year when the jury drops six categories, claiming standard entries.



"It's great to win at a festival where there is no doubt that only the best are considered. On one hand, I understand the disappointment of those people who hoped to win and didn't, but it seems more important that the jury maintain high standards," says the 39-year-old director.

The award-winning 30-minute documentary on a development project in West Africa was made for CUSO with participation from The Third Avenue Resource Centre and Videographe. It will be broadcast on ACCESS-Alberta in the fall.

Beitel and co-director Mirielle Landry are currently working on a one-hour video documentary about Haitian taxi drivers and racism in the taxi industry in Montreal.

Mangaard gets cash for comedy

TORONTO - Annette Mangaard has been named the first filmmaker to benefit from a co-production deal with the



Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto.

The arrangement is worth \$10,000 (\$7,000 cash and \$3,000 in services) towards the production of *Living in the Shadow of Anna*, which Mangaard describes as "an innovative documentary" about two artists, Judith Schwarz and Spring Hurlbut.

"It's not going to be a straightforward documentary," Mangaard said in an interview. "I'm trying to get inside the artist's head, and find out why they do this kind of work."

The LIFT deal will allow her a larger budget for the film, without forcing her to surrender creative control.

"LIFT has been thinking of doing a co-production for about four or five years. What was always the problem was a kind of a power struggle. So finally they decided that they would have a hands-off approach. They would let the director/producer do pretty well what they wanted, as long as they kept LIFT informed of it, and any major changes or decisions were made with LIFT's cooperation. When the film is finished, LIFT will help to promote it, and if any money is made, LIFT gets a percentage based on their investment."

Mangaard is also currently working on a feature to be shot in Toronto and Vancouver. "It's called *Moo*," she begins, "and it's by a playwright called Sally Clark. It spans a period from the '20s to contemporary times. It's about a woman who's very progressive. She marries a man who shoots her in the head and then locks her away in a mental institution. Eventually she gets out, and

she's still obsessed with him, and she follows him all over the world.

She adds, "It's a comedy."

Wintonick to trim down Watkins

MONTREAL - The making of Peter Watkins' *The Journey*, a 14-hour epic on issues of world peace, has been a journey of sorts for Peter Wintonick who will fly to London in the fall to supervise the editing to nearly half its original length.

Wintonick, who lives in Montreal and who edited the original version, has been in



contact with Watkins on the difficult task of reducing screen time to nine hours.

By early-August, says Wintonick, Watkins had already developed close to 40 different computer-driven reduced versions.

Wintonick says the 14-hour original version was not a mistake. He says it is a film that "stands against the wall of the systemic way of doing things" and that the struggle to complete *The Journey* will have been worth it if it breaks new ground.

"The 14-hour version will always be around. It is an important film yet to be discovered," says Wintonick, who adds that the title text in the reduced version will indicate what segments have been edited out.

Channel 4 in the U.K. is planning an Easter broadcast of the reduced version. It will then be language versioned in

eight different countries as per a sales deal negotiated by Montreal's Films Transit.

WNET-New York (PBS) aired the 14-hour version for eight days starting August 1. There is movement within PBS towards a network broadcast.

Fisher wears three hats

VANCOUVER - The former director of the Vancouver International Film Festival has three new jobs, one temporary, one a logical continuation of her work as a film programmer and another that sees her doing something completely different.

She's been invited to sit on the jury of the Venice Film Festival with the likes of Angelica Houston and Claus Maria Brandauer. That's temporary and a sure-cure for the bruises of her departure from the VIFF.

Then she's off to China and many other points around the Pacific Rim as president of Crawford Hawkin's new company, Marketplace Communications. Her mission; to judge the viability of an annual Pacific Rim Marketplace in Vancouver.

Cinema Canada is also pleased to report that she has agreed to write a regular Pacific Rim column beginning in the November issue. These will be filed from various ports of call and will constitute a completely new experience for Fisher, who will also be featured in our overall Pacific Rim coverage next month.