

ACTRA/Paramount agreement stands

VANCOUVER - What started out as a local branch grievance, and turned into what B. C. ACTRA branch rep. Peter Dent termed as a "constitutional crisis" within ACTRA, has simmered down into a compromise. With the Paramount/ACTRA B. C. agreement in place, there is a commitment by the National Council of ACTRA to come up with solution to the problem of Canadian writers working (or not working) on American productions.

The agreement with Paramount that the B. C. branch of ACTRA signed in September, requires a minimum number of B. C. writers to be hired per season by Paramount under an agreement similar to the Writers Guild of America (WGA) contract.

The agreement was part of the resolution to a grievance filed by the local branch of ACTRA against Paramount over a B. C. ACTRA writer signed to a WGA contract.

When the B. C. Branch informed the National Council of ACTRA of the agreement, the National Council attempted to reopen the contract with Paramount. Paramount refused. A *Cinema Canada* (Issue #156) article on the issue upset some people within ACTRA as well as the Canadian producers with whom ACTRA negotiates.

"The Canadian producers are very unhappy with individual branches of ACTRA signing agreements with the Americans," says Marion Fraser, chairperson of the National Writers Council of ACTRA and a B. C. writer herself. She opposes the Paramount agreement saying "It's not considered an agreement as far as ACTRA is concerned because, for one thing, it did not go to the membership."

Fraser says that the local branches of ACTRA have the power to sign local agreements. However, as far as she and the National Council are concerned, any agreement with Paramount is not local.

ACTRA general secretary Garl Neil says, "We are sending the word out to the whole industry that branches don't have the right to negotiate separate agreements. The Paramount agreement is not one we support."

Says Fraser, "Everyone finds attractive the idea of working for the Americans, but for the most part our work is not for American producers. The bread and butter doesn't come from the American producers. We initially have to work with and live with our Canadian producers and at the same time acknowledge that we have to negotiate with the Americans and that this should be done properly through the correct channels of negotiation."

She understands that the action taken by the local branch was because of the frustration of B. C. writers unable to work on the American

productions. American productions are a much greater part of the B. C. industry than the industry in Toronto.

Fraser says the reason there is no existing agreement between ACTRA and the U.S. producers addressing the realities of American production is because, "historically they (the American producers) haven't felt they had to deal with ACTRA (as their import productions were mostly written by American writers)."

Fraser notes that Cannell Studios of Canada has signed an ACTRA agreement and that, prior to the ACTRA's signing a writer working under the ACTRA agreement for a Paramount production, got over \$42,000 for one production vs. \$28,000 for an American writer under the WGA agreement.

Helena Zukowski, president of the B. C. Writers Branch of ACTRA, says "Basically what we have done was draw their (the National Council) attention to a new problem, that we have a number of American production companies making a long-term commitment to production in B. C. and we want to have an agreement in place where we can write for them. It's unfortunate that there was so much of a tempest about it but I think it's drawn attention to a problem that has to be resolved."

Says Fraser of the desired standard agreement with the Americans, "We want something that all American productions and all Canadian writers can benefit from, not something like this."

Boutet wins Alberta-Quebec Prize

MONTREAL - Richard Boutet, director of *La Guerre Oubliée*, is the winner of the 1988 Alberta-Quebec Prize for Innovation in the Art of Cinema.

Boutet was awarded the \$5,000 prize by Greg Stevens, minister of Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism, Lise Bacon, ministre des Affaires Culturelles du Québec and Charles Denis, president of the Société Générale des Industries Culturelles Québec (SOGIC).

A portrayal of the World War I era in Quebec, *La Guerre Oubliée* has been called a "cry for peace". It was produced by Les Productions Vent D'Est.

The Quebec-Alberta Prizes are given annually by the governments of Quebec and Alberta for excellence in Canadian film and television.

An honorable mention was awarded to Nicole Giguère's *Histoire Infame*, produced by Vidéo Femmes Production.

Last year's winner in the cinema category was Anne Wheeler for *Loyalties*.

The 1988 edition of *The Producer's Masterguide* is an exhaustive store of production data covering the motion picture, television, commercials, cable and videotape industries in the U.S.A., Canada and the U.K. Compiled by publisher Shmuel Bension, this hefty manual, an invaluable reference source for industry professionals, provides detailed and accurate information on every facet of production. (*Producer's Masterguide*, 611 Broadway, NYC, \$79.95 prepaid).

Published by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the 1987 *Annual Index of Motion Picture Credits* supplies a fully cross-indexed production roster of 379 U.S. and foreign features that qualified for this year's Academy Awards. Included is a 1976-87 cumulative list of film titles. Meticulously edited by Ms. Byerly Woodward, it is an authoritative record, basic for scholarly research. (*AMPAS*, Beverly Hills, CA, \$80, \$60 for subscribers).

Scott Palmer's well-researched reference work, *British Actors' Credits 1895-1987* assembles extensive data on some 5,000 performers, including vital statistics, brief character descriptions and a full listing of their movies. Separate sections deal with film award winners, performers appearing in more than 100 films, and recipients of U.K. honorary titles. (*McFarland*, Jefferson, NC, \$55).

A valuable assist to cinematographers, *Gearfax Manual* provides, in convenient form, essential information on 35 and 16mm cameras, geared and fluid heads, dollies, cranes, support systems and film stocks. Data appears on sturdy laminated cards fitting into a special ring binder for easy updating. Each card describes a specific product and includes a photograph, technical data and threading diagrams or dimensional drawings. (*Alan Gordon Enterprises*, Hollywood, CA, \$59.95).

A searching study of "masochist esthetics" in cinema, Gaylyn Studlar's *In the Realm of Pleasure* examines the Marlene Dietrich-von Sternberg film collaboration. Probing the sources of their movies' psychological and visual complexity, Studlar finds in the star's androgynous mother-figure the link between cinematic enjoyment and masochistic sexuality. (*U. of Illinois Press*, Champaign, \$29.95).

In Hitler: The Newsreel Witness, editors K. R. M. Short and Stephen Dolezel assemble articles by an international group of scholars about the use by the Allies of WWII film footage for instructional and propaganda purposes in the re-education of a defeated Germany. (*Routledge*, NYC, \$37.50).

Two more books in the seemingly inexhaustible Presley saga. *Elvis and the Colonel* by Dick Vallenga reveals the unscrupulous money-grabbing of "Col." Tom Parker, Presley's manager, who eventually destroyed the singer's career. (*Delacorte*, NYC, \$17.95). In *Priscilla, Elvis and Me*, top male model Michael Edwards narrates an intimate, often tastelessly explicit account of their tempestuous relationship. (*St. Martin*, NYC, \$18.95).

Sometime actress and scriptwriter, and full-time bohemian, Patrice Chaplin writes breathlessly about her adventurous life in *Albany Park* and its sequel *Another City*. A transitory marriage to Michael Chaplin, son of the great Charlie, runs low among other amorous adventures, jobs in films, and thrashing around in her confused, unstable world. (*Atlantic Monthly*, NYC, \$8.95 and \$9.95).

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