structure, direction, and image enhance this familiar story and its characters.

If the term "fragmentation" can be used to describe Esther's psychological state, it can also be seen as inherent in the montage and visual style of Onzième Spéciale, a collection of images and experiences from Esther's life and art. This is truly an episodic film (ah, television), and the insights are sporadic for Esther as well as the viewer. Lantôt's subtle images of how the director (Pierre Mignot) and actress (Louise Bour) capture Esther in her own opacity; we see her in and through other materials: faceted and distorted in mirrors, silhouetted through patterned glass, windows.

Esther is one against the world - her family, the organized art community, her high school milieu - and is often filmed in perspective with the physical space around her. Perhaps most importantly, we see her against a blank canvas, unable to execute a self-portrait. The overall visual approach emerges as a metaphor for Esther's confusion, questioning the notion of images and who creates them. Although unable to "see" herself, Esther paints images of other women, and she resists being disfigured, disfigured, non-human. What is the question: what is a woman? and "of what is her self-image made?"

A character film, a tale out of film. A theme film. An editor's film. Surprising for "made-for television." Not surprising considering the creative team. A look behind the camera reveals quite a constellation, so much so that it is difficult to say whether at least one critique is appropriate here. "Anecdote?"

What are the drawbacks of Onzième Spéciale? Lantôt offers no answers for Esther's human drama - only windows. And surely the characters are stereotypical, and the criticism of the art world has been heard before. Yet the humour, creativity, and freshness with which the story is told merit the re-telling.

Harriet Wichin

ONZIEME SPECIALE

Sylvie Catherine Beaudoin as Esther in Onzième Spéciale

Jon Hess

WATCHERS

Digested as a FREAK (Film Reviewer, Exploitation / Actioners / Kitchy) I observed another Canadian attempt to penetrate U.S. drive-in circuits and radio-networks camouflaged as a bona fide American operation.

If this observer is permitted an opinion, these Canadian undercover activities represent a clear and present danger to our balance of terror and threaten the cornerstone of U.S. policy in this hemispheres, namely the Monroe Doctrine, according to which no other power is allowed to make American movies.

The danger comes from two sources: (a) the similarity of terrain permits the Canadiens to substitute fraudulently for ours, and (b) their actors, writers, and directors have managed, through years of painstaking imitation, to pass for one of U.S.

Writers, were it not a dangerous and near-successful attempt to penetrate our defenses, could be dismissed as Lustie Meets Godzilla, Three Days of the Oxcorn or Grizzly and the War Games. The hybrid titles are a natural outgrowth of the CIA-operation-gone-wrong and danger-stalks-the-land-as-a-consequence plot, another cloning achievement of that all-powerful multinational conglomerate, Industrial Plot and Action.

Specifically, Watchers deals with the escape of the "ultimate predator", a.k.a. Outside Experimental Combat Manual or Oxcorn. Oxcorn Must Be Stopped, not only because it keeps on killing everything in its way with predictable regularity and not only because it is telepathically linked to a nice doggie, but because the CIA team that created and trained it (it has a Hidden Agenda, wouldn't you say?) leaves a bloody trail until he Meets Its Match in the person of a clean-cut teenager and his rather cute Mom, who disappears at the beginning of this report. Watchers is a force to be reckoned with. It is professionally scripted with a b.95beat cliché-ratio, with fully computerized scenario and diesel-powered sequencing, featuring a Syd Field-tested structure with hurdle-driven dramatics.

For the most part, the direction and cinematography demonstrate shock-proof trade-craft. Actors, with the exception of Corey Haim, turn in a performance perfectly matching the exigencies of the project. Clean Teen, Spunky Mom and Sneaking Villain being possibly more memorable than the script called for, but this could have been caused by an error in writing. Oxcorn's efficacy is difficult to determine; possibly for budgetary reasons, he, she, it, is never fully visible. Even if not its status as a mammal can be certified on the basis of visual sighting.

However, we must bite the bullet: the Canadians nearly got away with successfully launching across the border a near-perfect pop, a deceptively well-made and commercially feasible replica of a U.S. B-89 Bomb.

Almost, but not quite. Fortunately, Watchers has been intercepted by the undersigned before it could become part of American culture. This, thanks to the vigilance of this editor and some minor, but telltie flaws in the film's concept and execution.
The first clue indicating subversive activity was the deliberate withholding of an adequate amount of gore in the first two acts: while the perpetrators may have wished to establish a sense of rising action, the poorly planned time-release mechanism of gore, gristle and gunshot indicates typical Canadian restraint. A sad giveaway?

The second clue also belongs in this category: the first time the film made an attempt at real gore, the butchered face and torn-out eyeballs of the victim looked so phoney, even a moderately splatter-happy six-year-old could tell. Was it deliberate sabotage? Is one of them working for us? Further investigation may be required.

But the fatal blow was struck by the dialogue. Quote the villain, speaking to some suspicious local citizens: "We are the government, we are in charge. Butchered face and torn-out eyeballs of the victim looked so phoney, even a moderately splatter-happy six-year-old could tell. Was it deliberate sabotage? Is one of them working for us? Further investigation may be required."

Only a Canadian would deem it necessary to reassure the American public that their institutions work for and not against them. This lack of patriotic understanding, or understanding of patriotism, is what finally exposes Watchers as a snowbird behind eagle feathers. However, we have no reason to be smug. Watchers came this close! The next time they might make it all the way. We better watch out for the snowbirds."

The price of liquidity is eternal violence.

Agent O89/0 Code name: Paul Gottlieb

WATCHERS

The price of liquidity is eternal violence. Agent O89/0 Code name: Paul Gottlieb