

## CHRIS MAJKA



The new kid on the block for film funding is the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA). Espousing a vigorously entrepreneurial approach, (in fact anything other than the traditional Atlantic economic bandage solutions of road-paving, wharf-building, and the like), ACOA is still trying to define what kinds of projects it will support. Film has at least a small toe-hold on this edifice of priorities with the recent announcement by ACOA of financial assistance to three film-industry organizations.

Film Nova Scotia has received \$42,390 for assistance in computerizing and publishing the sequel to their *Nova Scotia Production Guide*, which was well received when published last year. Screen Star Entertainment has been funded to the tune of \$37,500 to do a feasibility study of establishing a film and television production facility in Halifax. The proposed facility would have two studios and would be capable of undertaking most feature films and major television productions. The local branch of ACTRA received an almost insignificant \$530 towards publishing a directory of Atlantic Canadian writers and performers. Although this bodes well for ACOA's interest in the film industry, the recent announcement by Minister Elmer McKay of a 25 per cent cut in ACOA funds and a ceiling of \$2 million on projects, may well put a dent in ACOA's effectiveness.

## BLACK RIVER PRODUCTIONS

Filmmaker Neal Livingston (his production company is Black River, up in Mabou) has been knocking on the doors of Enterprise Cape Breton with considerable result. With their assistance he has put together a small production studio in Cape Breton. He has topped up his 16mm film gear as well as buying into the new generation of Super VHS equipment. With a camera, a digital audio recorder and an editing suite - complete with a time-base recorder and optical effects generator - he is in a position to produce near-broadcast-quality tapes with a minimum of up-front capital. The first production out of the gate is *John Dunsworth - The Candidate* (not to be confused with the Robert Redford film of a similar name), a half-hour documentary about local actor, director, entrepreneur and raconteur **John Dunsworth**, who ran as an NDP candidate in the recent provincial election. Livingston and assistant **Jeff Shatford** plan to keep the cameras rolling and have several more irons in the fire.

## LIFESIZE

The 10-year-old Nova Scotia College of Art and Design film series, *Lifesize*, went public this year in a big way. The 21 screenings of 17 films, at Wormwoods Cinema, drew solid audiences to a lineup which include *Passion: A Letter in 16mm*, *Kung Fu Master*, *Daisies*, *Sheer Madness*, *Born in Flames*, *Kamikaze Hearts*, *The Girls*, *The Man Who Envied Women*, *Jane B par Agnès V.*, and *À Corps perdu*. In addition the series featured a session with visiting New York experimental filmmaker **Su Friedrich** (*Damned if You Don't*) and another with local film critic and theorist **Josette Deleas-Matthews** from Mount St. Vincent University. Phase two of the project bought 24 women filmmakers together at Tatamagouche for a week of workshops on directing and scriptwriting.

## NATIONAL FILM BOARD NOTES

The NFB is keeping busy with the recent releases of **Hermènégilde Chiasson's** *Louis Robichaud*, about the former New Brunswick premier, and the upcoming release of *The Underlying Threat*, a new film by New Brunswick Filmmaker's Co-op founder and activist **Kevin Matthews**. It is a film about the threat of groundwater pollution, an issue of particular recent concern in New Brunswick, where Newcastle residents have been living for months on bottled water because of contaminated groundwater.

I attended the premiere screening of **Sylvia Hamilton** and **Claire Prieto's** NFB production, *Black Mother, Black Daughter* at the Halifax Trade and Convention Center. A second screening had to be hastily organized to accommodate the 1,000+ crowd. A *capella* singers *Four The Moment*, who sing the title track for the film, were on hand as was a strong showing from the black community, which gave the film a rousing send-off.

## BARON MUNCHAUSEN

Equally delightful for both local cinema and theatregoers is the sensational work of **John Neville** as the lead in **Terry Gilliam's** *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen*. Neville, for many years the artistic director of the Neptune Theatre, cut a wide swath here before migrating to Stratford. The Hyland Theatre, where the film is playing, proudly displayed on its marquee: "Baron Munchausen Starring Halifax's Own John Neville" in bold letters which shone across the Northwest Arm. Glancing up I half expected to see Neville laughing from the bridge of his hot-air balloon.

Montreal movie  
exhibition surpasses  
Paris

MONTREAL - Montreal is the summer and fall home of a massive three-part tour de force of famous movie sets, costumes and a tribute to the late Claude Jutra.

The North American premiere of Cités-Cinés (May 25 to October 15) is a joint project between la Grande Halle de la Villette de Paris, where the exhibition originated in 1987, (shown in Gand, Belgium, in early 1989) and la Société du Palais de la Civilisation de Montréal on behalf of the City of Montreal.

It is located on Ile Notre-Dame in the Palais, formerly the Expo 67 French Pavilion.

Sylvana Vilatta, artistic director of the Palais, says the Montreal exhibit surpasses the Paris show because of its vertical arrangement on three floors. The effect of Cités-Cinés on the top floor enhances the feeling of being on a Paris rooftop. The same holds true for the subway set on the ground floor, she says.

"Here we have originality," says Vilatta. "It was a great challenge in terms of the vertical positioning."

In Paris the exhibit ran for three months during the winter and drew 430,000 visitors. Vilatta says the Montreal show will draw many more people because of an added Montreal section.

"It is authentic down to promotional flyers in the mailboxes, you can't help but want to touch it to see if it is real."

To visit the Cité-Cinés is to enter a "cinema city" comprised of the scenes of 20 neighborhoods. Eighteen movie sets have been reassembled in detail and enhanced by a total of 160 film and video excerpts from movie masterpieces.

Some of the sets resemble city streets in Paris (with clips from *Paris qui dort* to *La maman et la putain*), Tokyo (with clips from *Godzilla* to *Le visage de l'autre*), New York (with clips from *West Side Story* to *Ghostbusters*) and Montreal (with clips from *À tout prendre* to *Dead Ringers*).

Other sets recreate a sense of being in the subway, a parking lot, an imaginary city, a New York laundromat. La Città Set features three Fellini clips among others.

All of the sets are decorated and lit for film and the soundtracks for each clip is transmitted via infrared ray-sensitive headsets.

The Montreal Set is a new addition to the permanent touring exhibition depicting the Plateau Mont-Royal, a popular city neighborhood with the characteristic winding exterior staircases, corner dépanneurs, a fire station facade and the interior of a set designer's studio.

Gilles Nadeau is responsible for all of the film clips. He was assisted by Werner Nold, an editor

at the National Film Board, on the Canadian and Quebec clips.

Nold told *Cinema Canada* that he faced the most difficult editing job of his career after Nadeau and Pierre Jutra of the Cinémathèque québécoise selected over 80 pieces of film from 50 Canadian and Quebec films.

The final 15-minute reel (of which Nold made 18 versions) shows segments of 11 films lasting from 50 to 90 seconds each.

"Claude Jutra had his own emotion," says Nold. "I can't tell you how hard it was to go from one filmmaker to another."

Cités-Cinés is presented by Cineplex Odeon and Bell Canada in collaboration with the National Film Board of Canada.

The Hollywood and History exhibit, presented in Montreal by Videotron, originated in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. It is billed as a "glimpse of history through the eyes of Hollywood's most famous designers" and consists of 55 original costumes from American films ranging from Ringo Starr's loin cloth in *Caveman* to Elizabeth Taylor's gown in *Cleopatra*.

There are over 250 sketches and photographs and a selection of costume accessories.

The costumes and sketches from films produced during different decades are assembled in period groupings i.e. Early Egyptian, Roman Empire, The Middle Ages, Elizabethan England, The Enlightenment, The French Revolution, Late 19th Century, 1900-1920, The Roaring Twenties, 1930-1940, and The Year 2000 and Beyond featuring the costume of the Imperial Guard in *Return of the Jedi*.

Period groupings allow the visitor to study the design differences between *Cleopatra* of 1934 (Claudette Colbert) and Taylor's 1963 version. A separate admission fee is charged for this section.

The third section, a special tribute to Claude Jutra, *Mon Oncle Antoine, Kamouraska*, offers a glimpse of his personal and professional life.

Film clips, original posters, photos, paintings, personal possessions are shown in a circular exhibition on the lagoon level of the Palais.

Video clips include Jutra in an interview with Radio-Canada's *Cinéma d'ici* where he talks about his films and Quebec cinema. Also featured is Jutra as an actor in *A Chairy Tale* which he codirected with the late Norman McLaren. Jutra's 11 feature films will be shown throughout the duration of the exhibition in the main theatre adjacent to the exhibition.

This tribute is presented by the Cinémathèque québécoise currently celebrating its 25th anniversary.

MONTREAL - The ways and means of Africa's inclusion in TV5, the international francophone television network, will be the subject of discussion at a convention of francophone broadcasters in Brussels this summer.