

THE PRAIRIES

Alberta

AMPIA SOUNDS OFF. A frequently asked question following any seminar has to be "Did you get anything out of it?" The March 13th and 14th Alberta Motion Picture Industries Association sound seminar held true to form, and by no means in a derogatory sense. A wide range of expertise was represented in the attendance: right from the fledgling "soundperson" (to appease the libber) to the experienced veteran film location and television soundman. It was one that brought both ends together in a loose, informal gathering to hear what the pros had to say, either in an instructional vein, or in the simple relating of experiences and handy hints.

I was particularly intrigued with the discussions on microphone selection and placement: that usually complicated problem of getting the most and the best out of selected mikes, under the worst conditions. Hans Oomes of the National Film Board handled that problem competently. He was more than ably supplemented by our own Don Paches, a partner and chief recording engineer at Damon Productions and, of late, a very qualified recording technician for CBC Edmonton.

The relationship of the soundman to the rest of the production crew was discussed in depth, by Patrick Spence-Thomas. Patrick is obviously very intent on making the industry recognize the soundman more, in the area

of preplanning and "designing" the job.

Edmonton's Art Haymer, chairman of the seminar and director of sound production for Cine-Audio, along with Patrick Spence-Thomas, gave the audience the works on proper editing and preparation of tracks, layout of cue-sheets, and mixing procedures.

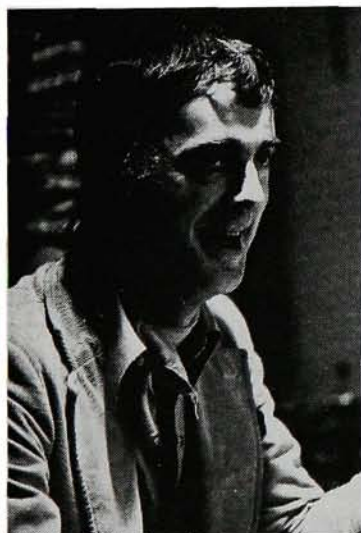
One of the big things the seminar did was to make the experienced soundman realize that a lot of his already routine ideas weren't all that far wrong. It instilled more confidence in our methods, and taught us how to improvise when we were lacking money or equipment. We've got some good technicians here in Alberta, and obviously a lot of desire to "get out and do it".

Along with a couple of production people from our neighbor Saskatchewan, we had the chance to play with a few nice little goodies: pieces of production equipment brought in by such specialists as Manfred Klemme and Don Matthews from Braun Canada, Clive Smith from Rascal Zone Magnetics, Steve Talian of Multi-Track Magnetics, and our regional emulsion specialist, Alec Besky of Kodak.

The Northern Alberta Institute of Technology was readied for our seminar by Dennis Dickens who made sure that we had projectors that could illustrate with ample quality, and that the room had maximum signal to noise ratio or "PA". Not to mention the coffee and donuts.

Banff, Alberta (in the heart of Alberta's Rockies) will be the scene of the next seminar, on May 15th and 16th. Registration is of course being accepted now for the two-day event to be held at the Banff Springs Hotel. Should you feel like a few holes of golf or just a good scenic break, I'd advise your writing a note to: AMPIA, Mr. Len Stahl, Exec. Sec., 347 Birks Bldg., Edmonton.

The CSC's Harry Makin will be out here soaking up the sun, and telling us all tall tales about how easy it all was. As was the sound seminar, so should it be with the cinematography seminar.



Patrick Spence-Thomas

Jim Tustian csc, cfe

Manitoba

THE MANITOBA FILM PRODUCERS' ASSOCIATION has been active soliciting work for its members. The executive of the MFPA recently met with the interdepartmental committee on film, vis-à-vis government tendering and projects for the upcoming year. Further meetings will be taking place in the coming months with the CBC, ACTRA, etc. As well, the association plans a one-day exhibition of the member organizations' films, possibly in May, to increase awareness of the versatility of film production in the industrial and commercial areas in Manitoba.

CREDO. One of the most active groups in the MFPA is the Credo Group. Derek Mazur and Brad Caslor formed Credo just over a year ago and already they have established themselves as an important company in the area of animation. Assisting them in the organization are Chris Hinton and Steven Rosenberg. Credo is currently active producing segments for *Sesame Street* and commercials for the Manitoba Department of Mines concerning litter and for Industry and Commerce on energy. The Credo Group hopes to expand in the near future into the area of live action commercials.

CBC WINNIPEG recently telecast the first in a series of locally produced dramas. Traditionally, the local CBC affiliate has centred its activity in the area of variety programming with such shows as *The Diane Stapley Show* and *Hymn Sing*, with the occasional drama thrown in each year. However, under Derek Goodwin and Don Williams the policy in drama is changing, with the anticipation of about six hour and half-hour dramas in the upcoming year. The first show, *A Kind of Game*, was a courtroom drama with an intriguing premise written by local attorney Bill Marantz. Lem Cariou turned in a beautiful central performance as the defence lawyer with good support from a rather large cast of local actors. The direction was somewhat flat but the prospects were encouraging that the remaining shows would be even better. Certainly a hopeful beginning.

THE WINNIPEG FILM GROUP'S annual general meet-

ing is planned for April 22, 1976, after a rather busy and rewarding second year of operation. The Group's most recent production, a half-hour drama entitled *The Crunch*, finished shooting in March. This marked the Group's first venture into fiction filmmaking and proved to be a tremendous learning experience for those involved.



Ian Elkin and Henri Less work on *Crunch*

The Crunch centres around Jay, a factory foreman who witnesses an accident at the foundry. This incident proves to be the last straw for him. Fed up, he walks off the job. The grind of his job is matched by the tedium of his home life. So, he finds himself walking out on his wife and children as well. Jay feels trapped by both worlds and when he seeks counsel from his friends, he finds more confusion. The possibilities for a new understanding seem feasible but difficult in the end and Jay returns to his family.

The original story was written by David Cherniack who took on the director's mantle. The crew included Henry Less on camera, with assistance by Ian Elkin and Elise Swerhone, Leon Johnson on sound, Warren Williams taking care of the electrician's duties, costumes by Nancy Edell, set design by Joe Grande, Howard Gurebich production managing, Vesna Cherniack assisting the director, etc. In all, a crew of up to 20 and the acting talents of such Winnipeg actors as Jay Brazzeau, Billy Marhenke and David Gillies.

The production was financed by the Group with the assistance of a Local Initiatives grant and material support from the NFB's Prairie Region office. Despite the incredible number of production hassles, too numerous to mention in less than book form, the film is currently speeding through the editing stage. It is hoped that a completed print will be available in late summer.

Len Klady