

The match of both motions seems to fling the actor forward by the craft and timing of his maker. It's an exciting moment that promises more to come.

A first film must be a shout across a canyon, so wide and deep are those first technical and logistical problems. Wisely, Moore has kept his shout simple.

David Sharpe

For Elizabeth

p.c. York University and Richard Zywockiewicz (1979) d./sc. Richard Zywockiewicz p.man. Aaron Lo ph. Robin Campbell light. Tony Sloan sd. Richard Irvine sd. ed. Richard Zywockiewicz ed. Clint Young l.p. Maureen Brown, George Belsky, Ron Wolosyn, Ron Hughes acknowl. Theatre Ontario (STEP), Ontario Multicultural Theatre col. 16mm run. time 22 min. dist. Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre.

Good intentions don't count for much in art. However well-meaning and earnest the filmmaker, the final product may be just plain bad: **For Elizabeth**, a 1979, York University, student production, written and directed by Richard Zywockiewicz, is a case in point. Despite the feeling and commitment behind this film, the end result is still corny and pretentious.

Zywockiewicz described it as "the haunting story of an immigrant widower and his daughter, in a sensitive portrayal of two lonely people, isolated, longing for the past when the family was whole. Although ambiguous and impressionistic, the film explores the breakdown of family relationships within a threatening society."

Sympathy is a tiresome justification for interest in a film character; but it is the only one in this film — and it doesn't work. Elizabeth and her father are presented only as victims, so the drama comes too easily, and is inauthentic.

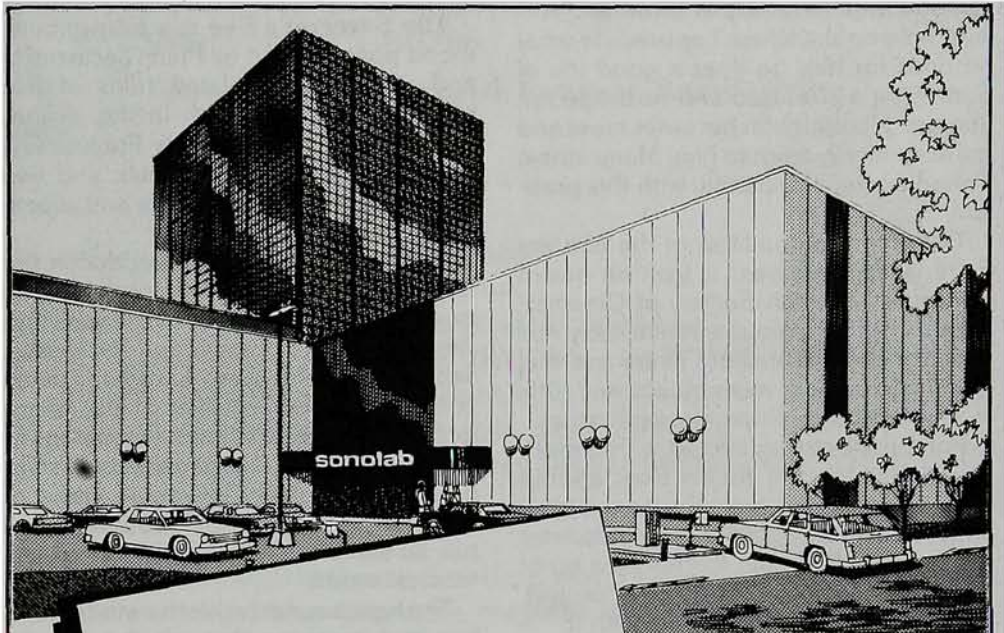
Elizabeth is shy, seemingly friendless, and treated as a sex object by inconsiderate males. Even the 'nice' boy she meets suddenly abandons her to go overseas. Her adolescent, or post-adolescent pangs, are real enough, but they are certainly not tragic; hence, they should have been treated in this film (if at all) with much understatement.

The dialogue is less at fault than are the situations. Elizabeth is shown running wildly along a frozen beach. She falls, and lies there until a young man (Prince

Charming?) comes to her aid. After an argument with her father, she falls asleep in her room, and is awakened by a ringing phone, probably her new male friend. Instead of answering it, Elizabeth stands in front of the mirror and combs her hair. Not only is the scene unrealistic, but one

later concludes that it is a script device, used so that the girl might receive bad news in person instead of over the telephone.

Since there is no evidence to suggest that Elizabeth is actually mentally disturbed in a clinical sense, her catatonic-



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SHORT FILM REVIEWS

like states only prompt the viewer to think that she should stop feeling sorry for herself. Maureen Brown was chosen Best Actress at the 1979 Canadian Student Film Festival for this role, but the character does little more than mope, and the acting is unsubtle.

George Belsky, as the father, deserves more attention. Though he is only called upon to look longingly at Elizabeth, and wonder why she doesn't appreciate what he does for her, he does a good job of portraying a confused and nostalgic immigrant. His daughter becomes more and more culturally alien to him. Many ethnic Canadians would identify with this problem.

The technical qualities of the film are quite good. Last year it won an award from the Canadian Society of Cinematographers. The colour is remarkably distinct for a student film. There are few gratuitous camera movements, and little reliance on flashy cinematographic tricks.

For *Elizabeth* is directed with considerable talent, but it suffers from a script whose sentiments are ten years out of date. Director Richard Zywockiewicz might be well advised to choose a script other than his own for his next project. He'd probably do a good job with it.

Gerry Flahive

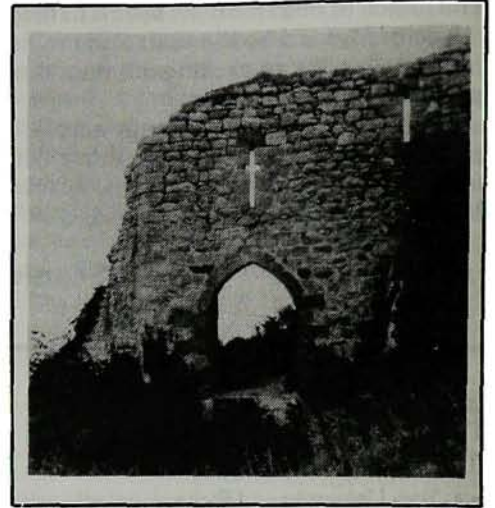
The Sorcerer's Eye

p.c. Lightscape Films (1979) p./d./ph. G. Phillip Jackson sd. FX from Soundmix Ltd. sd. mix. Patrick Spence-Thomas ed. Philip Jackson, Kenneth Gordon (asst.) lab. Northern col. 16mm running time 4 min. distrib. Lightscape Films.

The Sorcerer's Eye is a four-minute, mood poem, filmed by Philip Jackson, in and around the isolated ruins of two medieval fortresses high in the Yosges Mountains in north-eastern France. The piece, produced with a Bolex and two primary lenses, is an effective and evocative exercise in simplicity.

A huge stone circle, embedded in the hillside on its edge, is the focal point — an icon through which the viewer enters into Jackson's sense of myth and the mystic. Jackson deliberately works with the many portals and passageways of the abandoned ruins, inviting our imaginations to go beyond the bleak grey stone. A staggered editing pace, low-angle views of lonely towers, and a cold mountain sunrise all serve to call forth the Sorcerer's timeless world.

The basic soundtrack is the wind, whistling and moaning through the ghostly archways. It is quietly augmented by



electronics, and, as we are transported, by the echoes of a Celtic harp.

The film seeks to establish and explore a specific mood — no more and no less. And this it does. A poem: it's good to see that some people still believe in them for their own sake.

John Brooke

ERRATUM

Apologies to *Atlantic City, USA* for our error in issue no. 63, p. 5. In listing the credits for the film, the following were omitted: **assist. d. in prep.** John Desormeaux **cont.** France Lachapelle **d.o.p.** Richard Ciupka **csc assist. cam.** Andy Chumura, Larry Lynn **cam. apprentices** Paul Morin (Can.) Michel Guay (USA).



Elizabeth's father (George Belsky) — culturally confused, alienated, and longing for the past.

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