settings; in the studio, in the home, in the makeup chair in the morning, on the kitchen floor scrubbing at night. May waits with wine. There is an argument between them, where we see how she keeps her thoughts inside: in this case concerning the use of language in their home. She says to herself, "My tongue is tired of speaking English." This is heard in voiceover, an indication that May does in fact understand the nature of their relationship and its weak areas. Yet, in spite of any understanding we might have, we see in the next sequence that his actions are unaffected. May and Nolin have picked up the argument again. She asks him why he is not able to speak French yet; so that she may sometimes use the language with which she feels most comfortable. He says he is taking it off until the referendum. As though sensing the selfish implications of this answer, Nolin asks him what he will do if the referendum is won: will he leave her? May says he will go where there is work for him. Characterizing this scene, and their relationship as shown throughout the film, is his self-absorption, and her passivity. The passivity appears at times as a kind of sacrificing fortitude, but is, in almost every case, a concession made to her husband's unfair emotional terms and her own emotional insecurity.

The most glaring point to be made in Mother Tongue is that there is a politics in the state, the home, and the person: what is imposed upon the individual, and what is chosen by that individual, for the good of each, or for all, is the omnipotence of politics — there is no avoiding it; there is only an avoidance of pointing it up for what it is. May has shirked the tradition of "documentary" and the 'realism reconsidered' genres in Mother Tongue. Both genres aim to tell the truth; May seems to be avoiding it.

Katherine Dolgy

**Destiny's Angel**


*Destiny's Angel* is an independently-produced Canadian film for juveniles, whose exuberant music and magnificent colour almost counterbalance the film’s deadly seriousness. The story revolves around nine-year-old Melissa whose entire world has been shattered by her parents’ recent divorce; school and ballet lessons become dreary chores to be avoided. Shortly before the Christmas ballet recital, precisely when Melissa is supposed to be rehearsing for her holiday performance, she is seen wandering about in a public pyramid. The young girl’s mother, who has difficulty seeing and listening to her — she can’t film her as she really is for this reason. There is much evidence of this in Mother Tongue, in their daily activities, where Nolin is shown in a multitude of dilemmas of life, the inevitable paradoxes of human existence, the issues that were neither black nor white, were all decidedly absent from children’s films. Instead, a God-like narrator or a saintly child “preached” to the captive audience. But in a year when eleven-year-olds are queued up to see Kramer vs. Kramer, *Destiny's Angel* is anachronist-
Following her parent's divorce, Capp (Roy Witham) is Destiny's Angel to young Melissa in its sentimental morality. It delivers too many sermons. Ethical issues, of course, belong in films for every age group, but the viewer is not comfortable with a juvenile film which takes advantage of the viewer's youthfulness to sneak in a paid political announcement. Explicit journalism and adult fare on television, have helped raise a generation of very sophisticated, street-smart children, who have learnt to doubt all the easy pieties that nourished the last generation.

Can children recognize moralizing? One eleven-year-old described Destiny's Angel as old-fashioned. Her twin brother said it was like saying "orange juice was good for you."

The film misses the mark in its perception of children in one other area, that of speech patterns. Melissa often delivers her lines with an inflection that adults think children use in their normal speech patterns. For example, after meeting Capp, Melissa asks him "Do you come here all the time?" with the "all" pronounced "aaaaall." Similarly, Melissa expresses her fear of punishment by saying "She'll be 'fuuuurious' with me." In fact, children's speech inflections are quite similar to those of adults speaking the same language; anyone with an ear for language will object to Melissa's exaggerated speech.

Craig Cottle has produced a film which is rich in colour, sound, and mood, but he needs a script writer who is more familiar with the sophistication of today's juveniles. Otherwise, he has cause to be proud of his first professional film.

Gita Rotenberg

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ADVERTISING INDEX

Alpha Cine Servie ........................... 34
Barbizon Light ............................... 25
Bellevue Pathé ............................... 16
Derek Smith Ltd. ............................ 12
Editing House ............................... 32
Editors Cut Ltd. ............................ 9
Film Arts ..................................... 32
Film Opticals of Canada Ltd. .......... 15
Kingsway Film Equipment Ltd. ....... 20
MIFED ........................................ cover
Motion Picture Guarantors Inc........ 7
National Film Board ....................... 19, 34
Panavision .................................... 2
Proparms Ltd. ............................... 17
Sonolab Inc. ................................. 5
Spot Labs Ltd. ............................... 31
Video Club of Canada ... 1 & cover
William F. White Ltd. ..................... cover

40/June/July 1980
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td><strong>OCTOBER:</strong> IT'S TIME FOR MIFED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td><em>ATTEND THE THREE IMPORTANT MEETINGS:</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td><strong>43rd TRADITIONAL MIFED</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>(October 12-17, 1980)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td><strong>7th EAST-WEST FILM MARKET</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>(October 16-20, 1980)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td><strong>9th INDIAN SUMMER</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>(October 20-24, 1980)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td><strong>October 6-11, the 18th Screening Session of E.B.U.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>(European Broadcasting Union) will precede the opening of the Market.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Are you looking for a partner to coproduce films of any kind?</td>
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</tr>
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<td>27</td>
<td>Telex 331380 EAFM 1.</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>In the USA and Canada contact:</td>
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<td>29</td>
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</tr>
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