

### Smith to top Famous post in QC

MONTREAL – The controversy surrounding Roland Smith's sale of the Outremont Theatre was temporarily forgotten at a recent press conference when Smith, in his new role as vice-president of Cinémas Unis/United Theatres, outlined extensive theatre renovation plans for Quebec.

As senior executive of the Quebec wing of the Famous Players theatre chain, 44-year-old Smith has been given *carte blanche* for all booking and operation policies. Joining Smith as assistant to the vice-president is Carole Boudreault, former director of distribution for Les Films René Malo.

Smith told his audience at Montreal Sheraton Centre that new management is fully conscious of the specific nature of English and French-language film audiences in Quebec.

In a renewed effort to win the patronage of both language groups Smith said Cinémas Unis promises: to strengthen relations with distributors of Québécois and foreign French-language films; to bring out dubbed or subtitled versions originally released in a lan-

guage other than French as quickly as possible; to play a more active role in promoting Quebec-made films, and to prepare an inventory of short films from Quebec for exposure through its network of theatres.

Smith also took apparent delight in assuring his audience that repertory and art cinema in Quebec was alive and well and will be showing at Cinémas Unis theatres.

Cinémas du Parc, with three screens on Park Ave., will become The Bogart art cinema with one French, one English and one subtitled screen. The Capitol Theatre on St. Catherine Street East will become the Nouveau Cinéma, and the Kent will become the chain's west end repertory theatre. (The Capitol is next door to the only rep theatre currently active in the east end, the Ouimetoscope; the Kent is a few blocks from the only rep theatre in the west end, Cinema V.)

A dozen new screens are planned with two major changes in the immediate future being a multi-screen addi-

tion to the Parisien Cinéma in Montreal and a redevelopment of the Palace Cinéma also on St. Catherine Street.

Over 20 more Cinémas Unis theatres will be equipped with Dolby stereo in 1987-1988 and six theatres will be equipped to show 70mm films.

Cinémas Unis will publish two 40-page magazines (French and English) twice yearly, including a calendar of films for the art and repertory cinémas.

David Lint, a vice-president of Famous Players who attended the Montreal press conference with Jack Bernstein, president, and Walter Senior, chairman and CEO, announced that Ron Emilio, formerly of Cineplex Odeon, has been appointed senior vice-president of Famous Players as of April 27.

Lint estimated the cost of renovations and additions in 1987 – including a total of 26 new screens in Montreal, Mississauga, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Calgary, Brampton – at close to \$14 million.

### Fight for CKVU control

VANCOUVER – March 30 is the tentative trial date set to resolve the dispute between Daryl Duke and Izzy Asper over control of Vancouver Independent Television station CKVU.

On February 13, of this year, the CRTC approved transfer of control of the station from Western Approaches Ltd. whose principal shareholders are Daryl Duke, Norman Klenman and a company that was formed on March 1986 that is owned 50.01 per cent by Asper's Canwest Broadcasting Ltd and 49.9 per cent by Western Approaches.

The deal to transfer control to Canwest stems from a loan agreement which was made by the two parties when Canwest guaranteed a bank loan for \$4 million in 1979, and in 1982 forwarded the company another \$8 million. The agreement gave Canwest the option to buy out Western Approaches shares in the station, which Asper chose to do in 1984. The takeover has had a stormy protracted course, complicated by the presence of Charles Allard (owner of Super Channel and CITV in Edmonton) whose takeover bid

for the station in 1979 had apparently been the catalyst which caused Duke to go to Asper for financial assistance in the first place.

CRTC license approval was one of the conditions of the sale agreement but before the CRTC began its July 1986 hearings, the transfer of control was again being disputed by Duke and Klenman. An RCMP investigation into 38 allegedly forged letters of support for Canwest's ownership of the station put the CRTC hearing on hold for several months during the winter of 1986. By the time the CRTC approval of the sale to Canwest came through on February 13, 1987, Duke was claiming that it was a moot decision, as the agreement to sell had had an expiry date of Dec. 31, 1986. Asper contends that the deal stands, as the delay was caused by events beyond the control of either party.

While Canwest and Western Approaches have been cleared of any wrong-doing concerning the letters, an as yet unnamed individual is believed to be subject to charges of fabrication of evidence and obstruction of justice.

### \$4.6M offering for *Lance et compte*

MONTREAL – While the brokerage firm Midland Doherty Ltd. continues to take orders, hand over fist, on a \$4,600,000 public offering for *Lance et Compte/He Shoots He Scores II*, initial efforts to sell the first series of episodes to U.S. independent television stations have not been as successful.

A record-breaking 2.7 million viewer rating for the final episode of the first 13-part series on Radio-Canada, and relative popularity in the English-language market (CBC), do not guarantee immediate acceptance in the U.S. market, says Gerald Ross, in charge of sales of the series for Communications Claude Héroux Inc.

Ross told *Cinema Canada* that the initial foray into the U.S. market was met with a "cool reception" and that the Montreal-based production company is, as a result, looking for a U.S. sub-distributor.

"To make sales in the United States you really need an American (sub-distributor) who knows the territory, says Ross.

Syndication, as opposed to U.S. network programming is the most appropriate distribution venue for *He Shoots He Scores* which will have a localized appeal, says Ross, in areas throughout the U.S. where hockey is a popular sport.

Part of the initial U.S. reluctance to purchase the first series, says Ross, was the lack of a pilot episode and the use of composite scenes from episodes one, two and three. (The dubbing of the French-language version for CBC created wide-spread criticism in English Canada. An English-language version, starting with episode nine, increased the ratings from 770,000 for episode eight to 1,200,000 for episode nine). The fourth episode of the first series is currently being re-shot for use as a pilot in the U.S. market and at MIP-TV.

*He Shoots He Scores II* is currently on location in Switzerland, Finland and France and will be aired in January, 1988 for 13 weeks.

This second series, budgeted at \$11,614,000 is the subject

of a 4,600 unit limited partnership in a total offering of \$4,600,000 at \$1,000 per unit (minimum of 5 units).

The offer, which closes April 15, 1987, is the first public offering on a Quebec-made television series since 1980.

Doménico Vitale, investment executive with Midland Doherty says orders totalling \$3 million were written during the first week of the offering.

He says the popular appeal of the first series combined with limited risk on invested capital is what makes the offering so attractive.

An aggregate total of \$4,224,000 in financial participation has been agreed to by Telefilm Canada, O'Keefe Brewing Company Ltd., Ultramar Canada Ltd. and Canada Trust.

As well, agreements for co-production of the series have been entered into between the producer, TF1 (France) and SFP (France). The French financial participation is \$2,790,000.

Société Radio-Canada and CBC will pay \$1,625,000 and \$1,950,000 for five and four year Canadian television rights, respectively.

### Consternation in Ottawa

OTTAWA – Approval for a new Ottawa television station will have "serious consequences" for the CTV television network, one of the private network's affiliate companies has warned.

Standard Broadcasting president Alan Slaight said his company is considering an appeal of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications (CRTC) decision.

Standard owns CJOH-TV, CTV's Ottawa affiliate, a station that will be in competition with the new service.

The CRTC gave Toronto's Baton Broadcasting Inc. approval to operate a new English-language station, choosing it over four other applicants.

The new Ottawa service will not be affiliated with the CTV network even though Baton owns Toronto's CFTO station – the private network's flagship station. Instead, Nation's Capital Television Incorporated will be an independent station.

Slaight said the federal cabinet must consider an appeal within 60 days of a CRTC decision. The CRTC issued its

decision on the new Ottawa station March 2, 1987.

He said there are conflict of interest issues in the setting up of the new service.

"Unless the CRTC has a hidden agenda to destroy the CTV network I find their decision inconceivable," he said.

A press release from CJOH-TV states "It is a decision that has damaging implications for the structure of the CTV network..."

"The decision will have serious consequences, not only for CTV, but for all the local Ottawa television stations both English and French."

Spokesmen for Baton Broadcasting were not available for comment at press time.

Slaight said Standard Broadcasting outlined concerns at the CRTC hearing, insisting that it is the wrong time and wrong place to add a new television station. With the television industry under such economic stress, he said such a move would have been better left for a couple of years.

"No station should have been licensed, but if they were

Cont. on p. 59



## Emilio moves to Famous spot in Toronto

TORONTO – A senior executive from Cineplex Odeon Corporation has joined the ranks of rival Famous Players Limited.

Ron Emilio will become senior vice-president – film for Famous Players having left his job as senior vice-president – film with Cineplex Odeon.

Emilio, whose appointment takes effect April 27, 1987, comes to Famous Players with 37 years experience in film distribution and exhibition.

"I have worked in all aspects of the film industry and I know that Famous Players is held in high regard by those involved with the business and by the patrons who attend movies in the chain's theatres," he said in a company statement.

The 54 year-old Emilio ran Citadel Films, his own distribution firm, from 1979 to 1982.

Before that he spent seven

years as vice-president with Allied Artists and previously worked with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, first as general manager and then as vice-president.

As well, Famous Players has promoted two long-time employees as regional vice-presidents of booking.

Sixty-year-old Herbert Black, who joined Famous Players in 1952, will become vice-president, booking – west. Joseph Strebinger, 44, who has worked at Famous Players since 1964, will become vice-president, booking – east.

Walter Senior, Famous Players' chairman, said the Canadian movie house chain has a wealth of film industry experience and intends to provide audiences with the best movies and theatres available.

"The addition of Mr. Emilio to Famous Players' management and the promotion of Mr.

Black and Mr. Strebinger will clearly signal our intentions regarding the future of this company," Senior said.

Famous Players' president Jack Bernstein said the changes will help the company remain Canada's leading theatre chain.

## Cable clan

MONTREAL – The 30th annual convention of the Canadian Cable Television Association will be held in Montreal's Palais des congrès, May 3 to 6.

Communications Minister Flora MacDonald is the keynote speaker with an opening address by André Bureau, chairman of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission.

Representatives of the 430 CCTA member organizations will meet with industrial and political leaders to discuss the future of cable television in the 1990s under the banner "New Perspectives" – the theme of this year's convention. CABLEXPO, an exhibition by leading equipment and service suppliers will feature over 170 booths.

"The focus of the convention," says Bill Allen, publicity director for the CCTA, "will centre on how technological advances in the industry will match consumer demands."

Packaging, pricing, news services, cable's place as a competitive part of the home video market are several key topics.

Other timely topics will be a review of cable regulations, the Caplan-Sauvageau review currently underway and a specialty services applications with a CRTC deadline set for March 12.

## Record profits for Cineplex

TORONTO – Cineplex Odeon Corporation has announced record financial results for 1986 with profits of more than double the year before.

Cineplex reported profits of \$31,579,000 from revenues of \$500,615,000 for the 53-week period ended Dec. 31, 1986.

The \$31.6 million in profits last year compare to \$12,504,000 in profits from revenues of \$170,852,000 for the 52-week period ended Dec. 26, 1985.

Cineplex explained it used a 53-week period for its last report because it is changing its year end to match the calendar year.

Basic earnings per share for the Dec. 31, 1986 period were \$1.04 compared to 77 cents for the 52-week period ended Dec. 26, 1985.

The Cineplex balance sheet shows the Toronto-based exhibition chain received \$322,956,000 in admissions for the 53-week period ended Dec. 31, 1986. Other sources of revenue for the same period include:

- concessions – \$100,186,000;
- distribution, post-production and other – \$43,256,000;
- income from theatre property sales – \$34,217,000.

Theatre operations cost Cineplex \$362,239,000, while cost of concessions and theatre properties sold, depreciation and administrative costs are the other expenses.

## Radok takes top prize for Taming

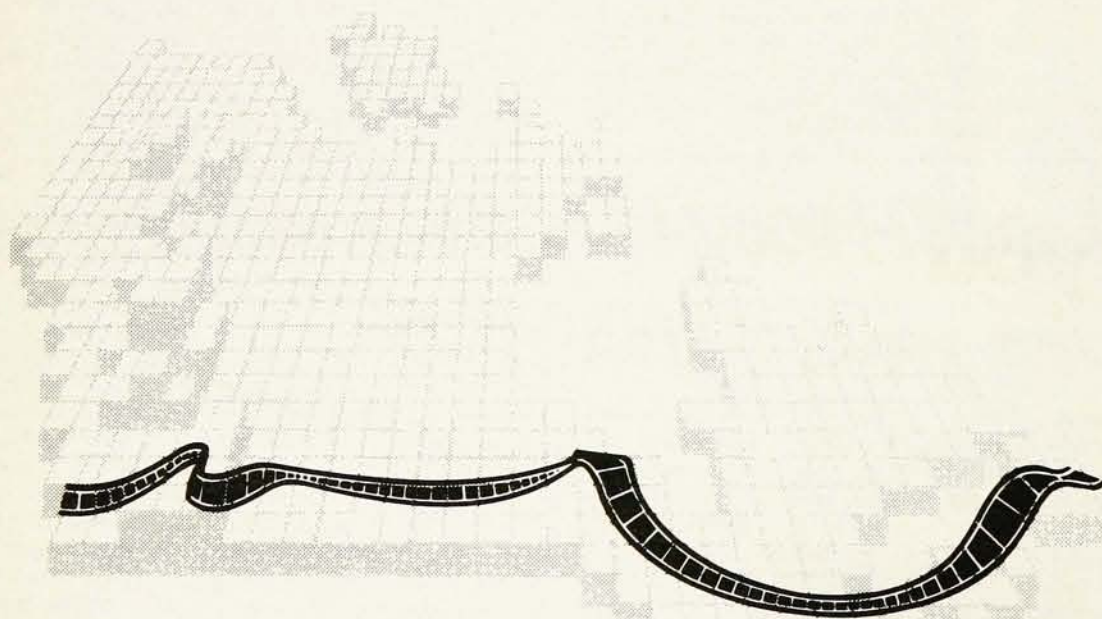
VANCOUVER – *Taming of the Demons*, directed by Emil Radok, is the Outstanding Canadian Film Achievement of Expo 86.

This audio-visual presentation, shown on nine screens at the Canadian pavilion, is the choice of the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television for the special award.

The film traces the evolution of communications from primitive times to the present day. Director Emil Radok is well-known for his *Laterna Magika*, a theatre and film presentation at the Czechoslovakian pavilion during Montreal's Expo 67 (see *Cinema Canada*, No. 132)

MONTREAL – Helen Shaver will co-star opposite Donald Sutherland in *Bethune: The Making of a Hero*, a Canada-China co-production to begin shooting in China on April 13 for 13 weeks.

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## Vancouver funds in question

VANCOUVER – A federal-provincial cultural funding agreement established last Spring is in danger of being broken, according to Tony Gregson, the executive director of the Association of Book Publishers of B.C. Representatives from the motion picture, sound recording, and book publishing industries have joined forces in a campaign to gain a firm commitment from both levels of government to the agreement. The Cultural Sub-Agreement proposed under the Economic Regional Development Agreement (ERDA) between Ottawa and Victoria, commits the two governments to share costs on a \$34 million fund for culture and heritage, to be used over a period of five years.

Unless firm commitment is made by the end of the government's fiscal year on March 31, funds allocated to the project will disappear and a cultural ERDA for B.C. would be delayed by at least a year.

"This is desperately needed job creation money, and it could be lost without the public ever having heard it was a possibility," stated Geoff Halton of Mushroom Studios. "The province just can't afford to let

this kind of agreement slip away."

A similar agreement for Ontario was put in motion last year at the same time as B.C.'s and has been signed. The lack of action in B.C. mystifies Ralph Maurer (president of the Association of Book Publishers) who commented that everyone they've spoken to in government is all for the agreement.

"Why, with all this unanimity and support, doesn't somebody pick this project up and carry it through? We can't think of a single reason in the world why the levels of government that promise jobs, jobs, jobs would fumble away a \$34 million deal they've already agreed upon."

## Yaletown gold

VANCOUVER – A Vancouver film company has won gold and silver awards at the Chicago International Film Festival industrial competition. Yaletown Productions received the top Gold Plaque Award for **Vancouver – The World In A City**. A Silver Plaque was awarded for one of a series of Expo 86 television spots commissioned by the federal government.

## Montreal upset by sale of rep theatres

MONTREAL – When Roland Smith hastily called a press conference in the lobby of l'Autre Cinéma, the Montreal press took notice.

For weeks, a whirlwind of rumour and speculation blew about the future of three repertory cinemas in Montreal owned and operated by Smith. However, upon returning from the Berlin International Film Festival, Smith called the press conference to clarify what he called a "few simple facts of life."

L'Outremont, Le Laurier and L'Autre Cinéma will close, said Smith, L'Outremont on April 30 and the other two theatres on August 31.

Of particular concern to repertory film lovers and residents of Outremont is the closing of the city's best-known repertory house (started by Smith in 1974) and architectural landmark (built as a movie theatre in 1928), the Outremont Theatre.

Smith, who has been hired by Famous Players as the vice-president of Cinémas Unis (United Theatres) in Quebec – the topic of a subsequent press conference (see story) – said that the deficit operation of his three theatres was cost prohibitive.

The facts are, said Smith, that the independent exhibitor can no longer hope to compete successfully with the major theatre chains, pay-TV and video sales/rentals for a stable clientele.

In a bid to pacify repertory cinema lovers, Smith told the press conference that closing his theatres does not signal the end of repertory and art cinema in Montreal, adding that Cinémas Unis is committed to supporting at least three such theatres.

He said the outcry by Outremont City Council about the architectural value of the Outremont Cinéma and its preservation is unusual, given the number of architecturally sophisticated theatres that have disappeared in the last ten years without any protest. Smith counts 16 such closings.

The new owners of the Outremont, Baron Byng Construction, renovated Montreal's Monkland Theatre for retail and commercial use. The Outremont City Council has proposed to preserve the theatre by applying for official designation of the building as a historical landmark.

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## License renewal brings CanCon goals for CBC

OTTAWA – The CBC should aim for 90 per cent Canadian content each day, the federal broadcast regulator has recommended.

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) outlined a list of long-term objectives for the CBC in the corporation's recent television license renewal.

The commission said with the CBC's current financial problems it would be difficult for the corporation to reach these objectives in its upcoming license term. Therefore, the goals are to be long-term objectives, the CRTC said.

The broadcast commission said its vision for Canada's national public broadcaster is as a comprehensive, distinctive, quality programming service that is truly Canadian.

Some of the long-term objectives the CRTC recommends are:

- Canadian content over 90 per cent of the full broadcast day that includes 25 hours per week during prime-time of Canadian programming. Ten hours during prime-time each week should be Canadian drama;
- the purchase of 50 per cent of programming, other than news, sports and public affairs, from Canadian independent producers;
- a fair balance between regional and network production;
- a reasonable level of English

and French network program exchange;

- a full-fledged northern service;

- a complete closed-captioned program schedule;

- reduced reliance on advertising as public funding increases and the eventual replacement of CBC's affiliated stations.

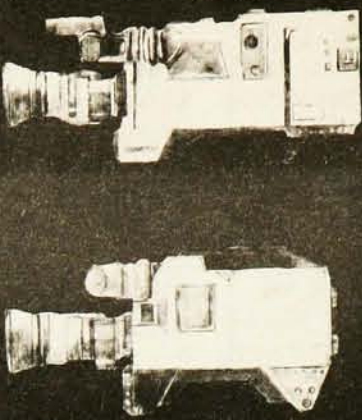
The CRTC renewed CBC's French and English television licenses in February for the April 1, 1987 to March 31, 1992 period.

Eight days of public hearings were held in the review of CBC's license renewal application. Those hearings were the first major public review of the CBC since 1979.

In a recent statement, broadcast commission chairman André Bureau commended the CBC for its production and scheduling of Canadian drama, a tradition of news and public affairs excellence, its children's programming and the non-violent nature of programming.

"As the national public television service, the CBC has played a pivotal role not only in the development of our broadcasting system but, indeed, in the development of our very identity as Canadians."

If new broadcast legislation is approved during CBC's renewal period the CRTC said it would reconsider the terms of the license taking into account any new role given the corporation.



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# Télé Quatre Saisons takes stock after rocky start

MONTREAL – Engineering and administrative problems aside, Quebec's newest television network, Television Quatre Saisons, now proposes to take a hard look at its programming.

Adrien Pouliot, vice-president and general manager of CFCF Inc., majority owners of TQS, says looking back on the first six months of network operation (on air, Sept. 6) is not a painful experience, regardless of what the industry doomsayers say.

He contends that on-air technical difficulties and the departure of several senior employees – namely Réal Barnabé, vice-president of news; program directors Madeleine Careau and Lise Either; anchorman Stéphane Boisjoly and, most recently, Guy Fournier, vice-president of programming – are the growing pains expected of a network in its infancy.

Also expected, he says, is the financial loss incurred during the first year of operation. Although he refuses to give details of TQS financial status, a CFCF quarterly report for the first three months ending Nov. 30, 1986 shows a TQS deficit of \$3 million after revenues of

\$5.3 million, costs of \$10.6 million and future tax credits of \$2.3 million.

Pouliot denies reports that the annual deficit will exceed a projected \$8 million and reach \$12 million.

"This rumour was started by a disgruntled former employee," says Pouliot, explaining that the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission granted a broadcasting license on the basis that TQS, with the support of CFCF, could absorb start-up losses.

"We can absorb the financial losses and it is our intention to nurse this baby until it walks and runs. So the question is not is TQS going to stay on the air, rather, the question should be how fast is TQS going to become number one," says Pouliot.

According to the latest (March 5) Bureau of Broadcast Measurement release, the rating average for CFJP-35 (TQS) in the Montreal French-language market is seven per cent, well behind CFTM-10 (Télé-Métropole) with 34 per cent, CBFT-2 (Radio-Canada) with a 32 per cent average and Radio-Québec with 8 per cent.

An 11 per cent year-end market share projected by TQS for the CRTC (and thus for the advertisers) is a "conservative figure," says Pouliot. Cautiously he adds that "Global TV came in (1972) with 3 per cent."

TQS has dropped its advertising rates since September but rates in the French-language market are down right across the board, says Pouliot.

"We are following the market."

Now that engineering and administrative problems have been settled, Pouliot says, TQS will concentrate on increasing the quality of its programming. The original "revolutionary" programming orientation, espoused by Guy Fournier, former vice-president of programming prior to leaving TQS on "amicable terms," remains intact, but the ratings have resulted in shifts and cancellations.

Close to 60 per cent of the production budget goes to independent producers and approximately 50 per cent of program hours per week is live-television.

Pouliot says that the first rule in revolutionizing the look

of network television (in an effort to adapt to changing viewer habits with the advent of pay-TV and VCR) is to develop a sense of achievement and self-confidence among the employees behind the scenes.

He says, TQS news is a good example of what a reorganized department (following the dismissal of Barnabé and the hiring of Jean Rivard from the CFCF Pulse newsroom) can do.

"He (Rivard) has the experience to get the new staff to do what it does best without getting caught in equipment and assignment problems."

The news remains predominantly local with a human interest angle but camera (carrying)-reporters, an idea borrowed from CITY-TV, are used less frequently as reporters found it difficult to handle both jobs in busy and crowded situations.

Though not new or revolutionary by any stretch of the imagination, the late night erotic movies, once weekly, do appeal to a certain market, says Pouliot.

He rejects any suggestion that *Cinéma Bleu Nuit*, scheduled for three consecu-

tive Saturday nights in March, is a desperate grasp by TQS at higher ratings." We have scheduled only three movies at this point in time. They are not cheap films. They have been successful in international distribution and they are not pornography."

Pouliot adds, however, that he would not want the *Emmanuelle* series to effect the general perception of TQS.

"We will try it and see what happens," says Pouliot. And so it goes with TQS.

## Fest on art

MONTREAL – The 5th Festival international du film sur l'art will be held at la Cinémathèque Québécoise in Montreal, March 24-29.

International film and video entries on a variety of art forms will be shown in five sections.

The opening night program entitled *Colour and Contrast* will include two animated films *A Little Phantasy on a 19th-Century Painting* (Canada), a tribute to Norman McLaren; *Un tragédie grecque* (Belgium) and a feature by Didier Baussy (France) entitled *Picasso*.

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# Canadian sales representatives net \$16 millions at the AFM

TORONTO – Private Canadian film and video exporters struck it rich at this year's American Film Market with more than \$16.1 million in confirmed and pending sales, Telefilm Canada reports.

Leading the way was Simcom International with strong theatrical sales of Canadian movies at the Los Angeles market.

Simcom's top selling product was **The Haunting of Hamilton High**, which was bought by the United Kingdom, Australia, Scandinavia, Holland, Greece and the Philippines.

Steve Johnston, Simcom's vice-president of sales, announced a major deal pending with a U.S. distributor for both **Haunting of Hamilton High** and **Higher Education**, another Simcom feature film.

This year's event produced the first seven figure market for Simcom, Johnston told Telefilm officials.

Simcom sold the critically acclaimed feature film **Dancing in the Dark** to the United Kingdom, Scandinavia, Germany, Israel, Australia and Argentina.

Other Canadian features sold by Simcom include **John and the Missus**, **Crimewave**, **Bullies**, **Lost!**, **High Stakes** and **The Kidnapping of Baby John Doe**.

Five smaller Canadian exporters appeared at the American Film Market under a first-time umbrella arrangement with Telefilm.

Thomas Howe Associates, Modern Cinema Marketing, Sullivan Films Distribution, Visual Productions '80 and Cinar Films made a total of about \$2.6 million (Canadian) in confirmed and pending sales.

"We've never had this much product sold before," said Telefilm Canada marketing officer Julia Frittaion. She said Simcom's sales as well as the first time arrival of the smaller companies made it the best market for Canada yet.

Most of the deals made by the smaller Canadian exporters were for the home video market, Frittaion said in a written release.

Some of the deals include:  
– Sullivan Films Distribution finalized video sales of **Anne**

of **Green Gables** to Japan, England, France, Australia, New Zealand, China, Hong Kong, Korea, Taiwan, Italy and Spain.

– Cinar Films Inc. signed a major co-venture deal with Viacom for post-production and distribution of 26 half-hours of animation. A Telefilm Canada press release states that

eventually Cinar will produce the North American version of a series already purchased by Viacom from a foreign country. Cinar will retain distribution rights for Canada.

– Thomas Howe Associates concluded a theatrical distribution deal for the animated feature **Toons X 9** with Ex-

panded Entertainment in the U.S.

Telefilm Canada also said various co-production and co-venture deals were concluded at the American Film Market, which ran from Feb. 26 to March 6, 1987.

Location Expo, a new aspect of the market started last year

that offers local production information, was attended by provincial film agencies from British Columbia, Alberta, and Manitoba as well as the Yukon.

Municipal government agencies from Calgary, Edmonton, Montreal and Toronto were also at Location Expo, which ran from Feb. 28 to March 2.

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Directed by Sturla Gunnarsson and Robert Collison. Best Canadian documentary of 1986; Grand Prize at the Banff TV Festival; First Canadian production to win the Prix d'Italia, the world's top public broadcasting award.

**Sitting in Limbo**

Directed by John N. Smith. A cautionary tale full of warmth and humor about the lives of black teenagers in Montreal. Three major awards: 1986 Montreal World Film Festival, 1986 Toronto Festival of Festivals and the International Film Week, Mannheim.

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Directed by Denys Arcand. Top Canadian film at the box office in 1986 and the first-ever Canadian OSCAR nominee for best foreign-language feature film. Co-produced by the NFB and Corporation Image M&M Ltée.

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\*The NFB costs each Canadian \$2.50 a year.



National Film Board of Canada  
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MONTREAL – The film **Le Déclin de l'empire américain** has surpassed the \$3 million mark at the box office breaking the previous record set by the French-language version of **ET**. The subtitled English-language version has pulled in \$1 million in Canada.



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## Mankiewicz takes on Cinevideo

MONTREAL – Film director Francis Mankiewicz has filed a \$260,000 law suit against the National Film Board, Cinévidéo Inc. and Justine Héroux, president of Cinévidéo.

In a March 12 application to the Quebec Supreme Court, Mankiewicz claims that all three parties did not honour the director's first right of refusal on the film **Les Fous de Bassan**.

Furthermore, Mankiewicz claims that Héroux and Cinévidéo did not negotiate in good faith with him.

In 1982 Mankiewicz, then a full-time employee of the NFB, acquired the film rights **Les Fous de Bassan** a novel by Anne Hebert.

In an effort to support private sector film production and because of the expense of

the film, already developed to an extent by Mankiewicz, the NFB sold the screen rights to Montreal-based Cinévidéo with a promise to include the director's first right of refusal as a condition of sale.

Mankiewicz resigned from the NFB in order to support this condition of sale.

A contract between Cinévidéo and Mankiewicz had not been signed when Cinévidéo hired screenwriter Sheldon Chad to work on an English version during the summer of 1985. Sometime later, a French translation of Chad's screenplay was ordered by the pro-

ducer and Yves Simoneau was hired as director. Shooting started in the Spring of 1987 without Mankiewicz.

Mankiewicz is claiming \$135,000 in lost director's fees, \$100,000 in lost revenues from the NFB and other contracts, and \$25,000 in moral damages.

Among the more popular films directed by Mankiewicz are **Les bons débarras**, (1980) the winner of eight Genies including best director, best film; **Les Beaux souvenirs** (1981, NFB), and **Le temps d'une chasse** (1972).

## Specialties held

OTTAWA – The federal broadcast regulator has again delayed the application deadline for licenses to run specialty television networks.

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) postponed the deadline from March 12 to April 30, 1987.

The CRTC wants submissions for new specialty networks such as all news services, teleshopping, youth, family, religious, health and music services.

The commission said it decided to postpone the deadline following requests from applicants and the House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture.

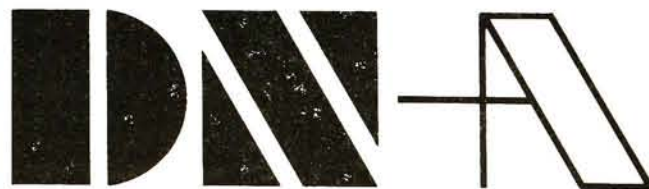
"While the consideration of these applications, which in some cases have been before us for close to three years, remains a high priority, this reasonable delay will, in our view, be of benefit to the applicants, the public, the interested parties and ultimately the Canadian broadcasting system..." CRTC chairman André Bureau said.

"The new deadline for submitting applications for specialty services will allow the applicants sufficient time to meet the requirements set last August in the original call." Bureau said in a written statement.

The original deadline was Oct. 24, 1986. The commission later set a new deadline of March 12, 1987 following announced changes in access to the Canadian Broadcast Development Fund outlined by Flora MacDonald, the federal minister of Communications.

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## Ontario court sends RSL, DGC to arbitration

TORONTO – The Ontario Supreme Court has ruled RSL Entertainment Corporation must submit to arbitration regarding fees paid the director of the movie **Heavenly Bodies**.

Supreme Court Justice Potts made the decision March 11, 1987 in a case initiated by the Directors Guild of Canada on behalf of director Larry Dane.

Part of the case revolved around the corporate relationship between RSL and MovieCorp VIII, the company incorporated to produce **Heavenly Bodies**.

Directors Guild president John Juliani said the decision could have important ramifications for the movie industry in Canada.

"This decision is significant for the film industry in general as it points out that the courts will not tolerate artificial dealings between the real producer and the shell company it incorporates," Juliani said in a written release.

Robert Lantos, speaking on behalf of RSL, said it is a matter before an arbitration committee in which no decision had been reached. Arbitration will decide the case, he said, calling this a "classic non-story" made into a story.

The DGC hails the judge's decision to send RSL into arbitration over commitments made by MovieCorp VIII. RSL, on the other hand, considers the process incomplete until the results of the arbitration are known.

Directors Guild lawyer Michael Bergman said the current decision could be an important benchmark for the Canadian film industry.

Bergman said the implication is that the courts are willing to look at the reality of feature film making in Canada.

He added guilds and unions should look down the road to collective agreements that contain clauses that capture who is the real parent corpora-

tion. As well, producers should be aware of the ramifications of setting up smaller companies within a parent company, Bergman said.

The court also ordered RSL and MovieCorp VIII to pay the DGC and Dane costs on a solicitor-client basis.

The judge gave 30 days in which delegates or a single arbitrator was to be appointed.

Dane is president of Canart Films Limited and was both co-writer and director of **Heavenly Bodies**.

TORONTO – Cindy Hamon-Hill is the new director of development for Atlantis Films Ltd. responsible for acquiring and developing various film and television projects. Hamon-Hill joined Atlantis in 1982.

Michael MacMillan, president of Atlantis Films Ltd., made the announcement, effective immediately.

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## ● C I N E M A G ●

### Consternation

Cont. from p. 51

going to license a station, they picked the wrong one," Slight said.

In citing the reasons for its decision the CRTC said the station's programming proposals are "particularly strong."

Nation's Capital TV promised to spend \$31 million over five years on Canadian productions, with a minimum of \$5.6 million in the first year.

The company will also spend \$20 million to set up operations including about \$12 million for a production facility where most of its local shows will be made.

Nation's Capital will broadcast 60 hours per week of local programming, which is more local programming than any other station in English Canada schedules.

Also, 26 hours per week between 6 p.m. and midnight of Canadian programming is promised by the new station. Of that total, 4.5 hours per week of Canadian entertainment will be shown between 8 p.m. and 10 p.m.

Nation's Capital will produce two dramatic series, both with hour-length dramas, for primetime and a special entitled *History of Canada* at a cost of \$1 million. Promises of other entertainment, musical, documentary and children's series were also outlined.

The CRTC said the advertising market in the Ottawa area

is sufficiently strong to justify a new English station. The commission added that the programming of the area's other broadcasters won't be hurt by the arrival of the station.

Commission chairman André Bureau said the Ottawa area will benefit from the expanded choice offered by the independent station.

The commission is confident that Baton's leadership, experience and strong finances will ensure "a truly local, dynamic and popular alternative," Bureau said.

But Slight said the new station will have to buy American programming to remain competitive and that will force up the cost of buying American programming across Ontario.

"All the product is currently bought. There is nothing left to buy."

"It's wonderful for people to say we must have Canadian programming. I'm not arguing that," he said. The facts of broadcasting life are that you need international product in your schedule or you won't survive, he added.

With eight local or regional stations in the Ottawa-Hull area, it is a heavily congested television market, he continued.

"They (the new station) must find and program strong audience appealing U.S. product or they will simply not make it in that marketplace."

The CJOH-TV statement cites research from the Caplan/Sauvageau Task Force on Broadcasting Policy that shows the creation of independent stations does not increase the viewing of Canadian programs. Instead, the release states, it provides a greater opportunity to watch American shows.

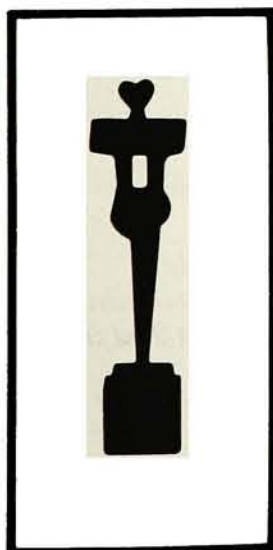
The license for Nation's Capital expires August 31, 1991. More than 900 interventions were filed at the CRTC hearings.

### Société offers \$100,000 for quality

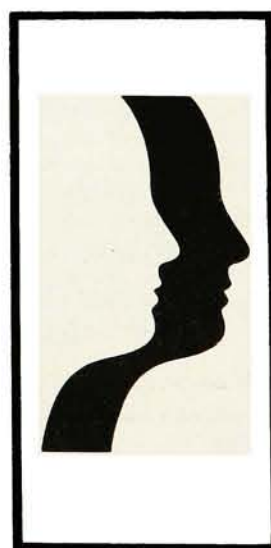
MONTREAL — La Société générale du cinéma du Québec, the Quebec government film and television funding agency, has announced that the *Prime à la qualité* 1987 will be offered for the second consecutive year.

A seven-member jury will determine which two entries will receive \$100,000 each, to be invested in the winning directors' next film.

The winners will be announced on April 28. Winners of the *Prime à la Qualité* last year were André Melançon for *La guerre des tuques*, and Jean Beaudry/François Bouvier for *Jacques et novembre*.



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LEGAL EYE

by Michael Bergman

Finance Minister Wilson's February 18, 1987 budget, as well as the upcoming tax reform package slated to come out in May of this year, should affect the Canadian motion picture industry in two respects, financing and film budget costs.

The impending tax reform package may affect the film industry the most. Tax reform in Canada has been inspired by worldwide, and particularly American, efforts to revise and make more equitable the taxation system. Finance Minister Wilson's remarks about tax reform indicate that the aim of the upcoming proposals is to broaden the tax base while emphasizing corporate taxation and lowering personal income tax rates.

Tax shelters primarily designed to avoid personal income tax have been widely used in Canada as a fiscal incentive to the development of certain industries. In the film industry, tax shelters were, in the late '70s, the backbone of film financing. Although film tax shelters have fallen into some disrepute in the '80s, it is still usual to see most offerings of film investments to private investors include the tax shelter incentive.

It is conceivable that tax reform will either abolish or considerably mitigate the utility of feature film tax shelters. Their usefulness as a fiscal investment incentive is primarily based on the structure of the existing taxation system. That system recognizes a capital cost allowance (CCA) for the depreciation of capital assets. This depreciation is written off in most cases over a period of years as tax laws do not permit a complete write-off in a shorter interval. The attractiveness of the feature film tax shelter is that it permits the tax-payer to write off his depreciation in one or two years. (Interestingly, and generally unrecognized, is the fact that although only certified feature films qualify for the 100 per cent CCA, all feature films including even those that do not meet the rules qualify for some CCA. Tax reform can affect tax shelters in two ways. It can so change the taxation structure that tax shelters become either obsolete or untenable from a policy point of view, or it can so change the existing general CCA system, and consequently depreciation rules, that the feature film tax shelter as presently formulated is no longer attractive or workable.

Policy directions alone may serve to eliminate the feature film tax shelter. The increase

of the Registered Retirement Savings Plan limit to \$7,500,000 per year and proposals to make it unlimited tend to devalue the attractiveness of film tax shelters with their inherent risks. Furthermore, if the aim of tax reform is to reduce personal income tax rates, the need by individuals in the highest tax brackets for such tax avoidance devices may be, if not reduced, then be somewhat offset.

Another element of tax reform may have important consequences on feature film costs. This is the value-added tax or, as more recently retitled, the Business Transfer Tax. This is a concept designed to replace the existing and widely criticized federal sales tax system as well as, to some extent, broaden the tax base. Business Transfer Tax would tax manufactured goods and services. Everyone manufacturing an item or contributing to its value by some process or providing a service will pay tax on the value of that manufacturing process or service, in addition to any income tax. This could apply to the feature film industry.

Most production companies make a feature film which they ultimately do not own; the ownership vesting either in investors or in another corporation. As such, the production house is in fact manufacturing the film for a third party and may consequently pay Business Transfer Tax on that project, thereby increasing costs. Furthermore, most above-the-line and senior cast and crew operate through their own corporations; they are not, in the taxation sense, employees. Since they essentially provide a service it is quite conceivable that under the Business Transfer Tax system, actors, directors and like personnel operating on a self-employed basis will also be hit with this Business Transfer Tax, no doubt in turn causing them to raise their fees.

Tax reform may also see the reform of the taxation status of actors and directors. The Siren report on the status of the artist recommended a new taxation category for these individuals. If tax reform implements this, the new status will alleviate much hardship and certain inequities which the artists suffer in the current system. On the other hand, the absence of this feature from tax reform would probably spell the end of the possibility of artists having a distinct taxation status and therefore expose them further to the mainstream of a taxation sys-

tem which does not acknowledge the peculiarities of their craft.

Finance Minister Wilson's February '87 budget will also have an effect on increasing costs for film production. With the application of federal sales tax to snack and junk food, presumably there will be some increase in catering costs for meal services on the set. On July 1, 1987 federal sales tax will become applicable on the importer's selling price to retailers in Canada of television sets and video recorders. To the extent that such an increase in price affects sales, the film and video industry will in turn be indirectly affected by the reduction in the number of exhibition units.

All in all, like most Canadians, the feature film industry in this country must await a reorganization of the tax system which can both close down former benefits and open up new opportunities. To an industry heavily dependent on Government incentive in one form or another, this can be a very anxious and disturbing experience.

Michael N. Bergman

Barrister & Solicitor  
Member of the Bars of Quebec,  
Ontario and Manitoba, with  
offices in Montreal and Toronto.

TORONTO - The Ontario Film Institute is presenting a retrospective of 20 contemporary movies from Argentina that will include five North American premieres.

The film institute retrospective is being held March 17 to April 30 at the Ontario Science Centre in Toronto.

The package of films includes everything from comedies, political thrillers, musicals, documentaries and "politically subversive melodramas," a written release says.

The Ontario Film Institute received the package through the National Film Institute of Argentina. In Canada, the retrospective will also be shown in Montreal, Ottawa, Vancouver, Edmonton and Halifax. It is billed as the largest Latin American film package ever to tour Canada.

The program was prepared by Tim Barnard, author of a recent book on Argentine cinema.

"Since the return of democracy in Argentina in 1983, after nearly a decade of military rule, Argentine films have taken the world by storm, winning major awards at prestigious festivals," Barnard said in a written release.

"A decade of silence and repression have given way to an explosion of activity and great artistic ferment."

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There are no tuition fees associated with this course of study. However, Residents must be able to locate in Toronto for one to two years on a full time and self supporting basis.

Applications must be received before May 15, 1987. Address requests to:

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# Tax relief for artists?

OTTAWA — It is anyone's guess whether tax relief for Canadian artists will be among the changes in Canada's Income Tax Act to be announced in May.

"All we know is that the minister of Finance is putting forward a white paper on tax reform," says Nancy Wah, executive assistant to Sheila Finestone (Lib.-Mount Royal), member of the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture.

Wah says there is general concern among committee members that committee recommendations for equitable treatment of professional artists under Canada's tax laws were not recognized in the recent federal budget speech (Feb. 18).

"The arts and cultural sector in Canada generates \$5.2 billion annually and this is one of the greatest sectors for spinoffs," says Wah.

"The minister did not mention in the budget that he received submissions from the arts sector. He did mention the voluntary sector and the business sector."

The standing committee recommendations are contained in a report on the tax treatment of artists and arts organizations. Many of these recommendations have been submitted

to the government in other reports including the Fisher report (1984), Bovey report (1986) and the Siren-Gélinas report (1986).

Dissatisfaction with the budget speech has also been expressed in a letter addressed to the minister of Finance by Michelle d'Auray, national director of the Canadian Conference of the Arts with over 1,000 members.

In the letter dated Feb. 24 d'Auray writes: "We regret the government has missed the opportunity to assist artists and their organizations at a time when all interested parties, including your colleague, the minister of Communications, supported the standing committee's fiscal recommendations."

TORONTO — Famous Players theatres in Alberta and British Columbia will show a one-minute production designed to heighten public awareness of the Rick Hansen Man in Motion tour.

The wheelchair athlete is currently completing the Canadian leg of his round-the-world wheelchair journey in an effort to raise awareness and money for research into spinal cord injury.

The one-minute trailer is footage of Hansen's journey through China.

# Super 8 fest winds down

MONTREAL — Erik Pauwels (Belgium) is the winner of the Alcan Grand Prize at Montreal's 8th International Super 8 Film and Video Festival (March 3-8), for his film entitled *Un Film*. Special Jury Prize goes to Matthias Muller (Germany) for *Final Cut*. Eduardo Newark (Argentina) also takes a Special Jury Prize for *Estibador Se Necesita*.

In the video category, the winner of the Radio-Québec Grand Prize is Robert Hamilton and David Clark (Canada) for *Rumblesphinx*.

The winners of the Grand Prize (film) in the *competition québécois* are Jeanne Crépeau and Stéphan Fortin for *L'Usure*. Special Jury Prizes (video) go to Elain Ayotte, Daniel Michaud and Pierre Paquin for *L'interdit de la nuit* and to Eric-Vincent Guilmette for *La Presse*.

The winner of the Grand Prize (film) in the *competition intercollegiale* is Pierre Fedele (Collège Montmorency) for *La Vue en rose*. Special Jury Prize goes to Nathalie Goulet (Collège de Saint-Jerome) for *14 ans et plus*.

Grand Prize (video) goes to Alain Richard (Collège de Montmorency) for *Baby Sitting Blues*. Michel Désilets, Mario Bourassa and Steve Roy (Collège Montmorency) win the jury prize for *Carence*.

Other prizes include the Union des Artistes Prize presented to Marie-Hélène Montpetit for *L'Usure* and the prize from the Quebec ministry of Education and Science for the film *Aithesis* by Jeanne Lafontaine (Collège Saint-Laurent).

Held at the Cinémathèque Québécoise, this year's festival showed works by filmmakers from Argentina, Switzerland, United States, Japan, Hong Kong and Germany.

German filmmaker Reinhard Wolf, founder of Koordination-buro der 8mm Filmmacker, an independent organization dedicated to the support of Super 8 filmmaking, presented eight films.

The Celestia Cinema pro-

## Night Heat

TORONTO — Night Heat, produced by the Alliance Entertainment Corporation has been renewed for an additional 22 episodes by both the CTV and CBC networks.

The award winning television series is currently in its second season on CTV and third season on CBC and is produced in association with Grosso-Jacobson Productions and the CTV Television Network.

Nicaragua as viewed by a group of Montrealers.

The 8th Quebec International Super 8 Film and Video Festival was organized by the Association pour le jeune cinéma québécois with participation from the Société d'électrolyse et de chimie Alcan Ltée, Société Radio-Québec, le ministère du Loisir, de la Chasse et de la Pêche, la Société générale du cinéma du Québec, le ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la science du Québec, Telefilm Canada and le ministère des Relations internationales du Québec.

gram included experimental Super 8 films by seven U.S. filmmakers from the Northwest United States, selected by U.S. filmmaker Albert Gabriel Nigrin.

In the Un Certain Regard program, the festival offered two films by Pauwels — *Violon Phase* and *Rites de Possession en Asie du Sud-est*.

Marie-Claude Larouche, a Quebec filmmaker, presented her *Toucher L'Espoir*, a documentary about daily life in

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY



## Film Studies

The Department of Cinema of the Faculty of Fine Arts, CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY, invites applications for a 10-month leave replacement position in the area of Film Studies at the Assistant Professor level to begin August 1, 1987.

The position involves teaching at the undergraduate level and administrative duties.

Teaching experience and bilingualism will be considered an asset as will demonstrated expertise in some or all of the following fields: Canadian Cinema, Contemporary World Cinema, Third World Cinema, Women and Film, Documentary Film, and Film History until 1960.

Vita and inquiries should be sent to Dr. Jacqueline Levitin, Chair, Department of Cinema, Faculty of Fine Arts, CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY, 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. West, VA-259, Montreal, Quebec, H3G 1M8. The deadline is May 1st, 1987 or until the position is filled. In accordance with Canadian immigration requirements, preference will be given to Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

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SHOOT ALBERTA

by Stacey Bertles

March rolled into Alberta like a lamb, and Edmonton's Third World Film Festival rolled along with it. Three days of productions by or about Third World countries began February 27. Presentations ranged from a screening of Werner Herzog's 1985 feature **Where The Green Ants Dream** to the Edmonton premiere of **Broken Rainbow**, an Oscar-winning documentary about the resettlement of the Hopi Indians. National Film Board (NFB) filmmaker Laurette Deschamps lectured on **No Longer Silent**, her new film about women in India.

Moving from world issues to our own backyard, Alberta Motion Picture Industry Association's (AMPIA) annual awards event kicked off March 20 with a seminar on music in film. To round things out, AMPIA also organized a meeting of the Western Motion Picture Industry Association and an animation workshop hosted by the Edmonton-based co-operative North West Media Network and FAVA. Public screening of AMPIA award-winners were held at the local NFB office March 22.

The National Screen Institute (NSI), which evolved out of the NFB and some other organizations last year, has sent out applications for its first batch of DramaLab students. NSI's board includes industry names like Anne Wheeler, Rock Demers, Peter O'Brian and Janice Platt, all of whom have been slated as instructors in the program.

DramaLab is designed for industry 'professionals' who want to develop their skills as directors, writers, and producers. It's basically a workshop/production program built around three phases. The first begins this fall in Edmonton. The second and third are planned for Montreal in the Spring and the Fall of '88 respectively.

In the meantime, seminar-prone directors can take advantage of the director's workshop at the Banff Festival. It runs for five days during the festival (June 7-13) and will be hosted by a panel of Canadian directors. Norman Campbell, Denys Arcand, Alan Ehrlich, Rob Quarteny, and Donald Brittain will share their expertise.

The festival will also feature a writing seminar sponsored by the International Writer's Guild; seminars on the effect of satellite technology with presentations by Moses Znaimer (CITY TV, MuchMusic) and Jeremy Isaacs (Channel 4); and a discussion of the relationship

between television and the feature film industry.

All this education may finally pay off. A few local producers are finding rewards in markets and awards. Peter Campbell sold **Rat Tales**, a half-hour drama which aired regionally on CBC, to Global. Jack Emack, who produced and directed the CBC drama **Letting Go**, won a Gate - San Francisco International Film Festival Golden Gate Award - in the local station entertainment category. Allarcom's holding its breath that the ratings for the March 29 airing of **Stone Fox** will warrant more production business from NBC. In the meantime, crews kept busy working on an underground feature for Don Archbold.

Archbold pioneered the rock video show format with **Rock 'n Roll Videos**, a series which ran on CBC four years ago. He turned his hand to feature writing and came up with a comedy about a down-and-out musician caught up in a nightclub scam. Claiming he avoided the usual funding route of applying at Alberta Motion Picture Development Corporation (AMPDC) and Telefilm because he didn't like the idea of "getting advice from someone with an abysmal record of failure," he went directly to local actors and crew members for support.

The script must be pretty funny, because Archbold used it to convince an entire cast and crew to work on deferment. Shooting took two and a half-weeks and wrapped March 4. Archbold called it a "non-preentious little movie" and said he's sure he'll be paying everyone back. "If people get a chance to see it, I know it'll do very well."

It's called **Just My Luck**.

CBC to carry AIDS info ads

OTTAWA - In view of the seriousness of AIDS, the CBC has made an exception to its policy of not carrying controversial advertising.

The CBC board of directors decided recently that the corporation would accept messages on a paid or unpaid basis from public health organizations to inform and educate the public about the dangers and control of AIDS.

In accepting these messages the CBC has emphasized the need for factual balance, good taste and respect for audience sensitivities and ethical concerns.

To maintain factual balance the CBC will ensure that any message that promotes the use of condoms as a means of preventing the transmission of AIDS will not condone casual or illicit sex.

Service house needs TF helps with hi-tech

MONTREAL - In need of a financial infusion, Film Docteur du Quebec Inc., specialists in film animation and optical special effects, is closing its doors to student filmmakers.

Jim Paquette, president of the Film Docteur on St. Laurent Blvd., says the exodus of lab work to Toronto and the volume of work handled by the National Film Board and Radio-Canada has resulted in a break-even situation for the lab, established in 1981.

In 1985, the Film Docteur reported a clear profit of \$1,800 on sales of \$275,000. Paquette says that over half of potential lab revenues is taken by government funded institutions with financial participation in co-productions.

As well, Paquette estimates that close to \$1 million annually leaves Montreal for the faster and more efficient Toronto labs.

In order to compete for dollars migrating to Toronto and with government labs, Paquette approached Telefilm Canada, early last summer, for a \$260,000 grant towards purchasing and updating equipment.

"I could go to the federal development bank for that money tomorrow," says Paquette, "but I am not going to borrow from the government to compete with the government."

"All I'm saying (to Telefilm) is that if you are giving money to producers as a direct grant, why not give me a cut and allow me to reduce the rate I charge the producer."

No longer, says Paquette, can he take time to train film production students from Concordia University.

André Herman, head of film production at Concordia, says that his students used the Film Docteur facilities "extensively."

He says he is "dismayed" by the closing of the facilities to his students and that he will support Paquette in his bid for Telefilm funding.

"Jim Paquette has been very helpful. It is kind of a burden having a student around but for the last two semesters he has had at least one student there constantly," Herman told *Cinema Canada*.

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# Screen Institute ready for the DramaLab class of '87

TORONTO — The National Screen Institute is searching for young Canadian filmmakers to take part in its upcoming two-year program called DramaLab '87.

The National Screen Institute (NSI) — Canada, which describes itself as a creative centre for practising filmmakers, is scheduling the fall of 1987 for the start of its new DramaLab program.

With an April 10, 1987 deadline for applications to the upcoming DramaLab, participants from the last program are in the throes of producing a \$1.5 million series of six half-hour television dramas called **The Border**.

When complete, the regionally produced series will mark the end of the two-year DramaLab '85. It is the culmination of a program that has grown into a permanent learning opportunity for writers, producers and directors from across Canada.

DramaLab started in Alberta and now involves young filmmakers and funding agencies from across Canada, NSI

executive-director Tom Radford said.

The screen institute unveiled its most recent plans at a Toronto lunch and press screening attended by several Canadian film and television heavyweights.

Some who attended include Peter O'Brian of Independent Pictures Inc., producer and director John Hirsch, John Kennedy of CBC television drama, and screen institute chairman and Atlantis Films Limited partner Janice Platt.

The National Screen Institute has also named five honorary patrons who include: publisher Jack McClelland, novelist Alice Munro, former Alberta premier Peter Lougheed, director and producer John Hirsch and artist David Blackwood.

Others on the board of directors include Rock Demers, National Film Board chairman François Macerola and Anne Wheeler, director of **Loyalties**.

The naming of the patrons comes about four months after Norman Jewison, at a Toronto

film industry press conference packed with political and cultural officials, announced the creation of the Canadian Centre for Advanced Film Studies.

Radford has said there is room for both groups in Canada and told the screening audience he is excited by news of the Centre for Advanced Film Studies.

Hirsch asked if DramaLab had any check on the traditional problem of Canadian English drama being too bland or too much like "gray flannel."

Radford explained that part of the work of DramaLab is to shake up the perceptions of participants.

He said the three-phase DramaLab program has evolved into an opportunity for filmmakers from all the regions of Canada.

"The process grew step by step. It had some lean years and some fat years," Radford said. Now the 18 Canadian filmmakers involved in the program are preparing a drama series for network broadcasting.

**The Border** series, which is being made under the guidance of executive-producer Michael Scott, uses the Canada/United States border as a metaphor for human relationships.

It marks the end of a program aimed at building skills in dramatic filmmaking.

"Writers, directors and producers from across the country have been learning to work together to tell a story that will succeed in the commercial marketplace," a written release states.

In phase one of DramaLab the participants were involved in a three-month immersion program in film drama at the University of Alberta and the Banff Centre.

In the next phase seven 15-minute dramas at National Film Board facilities in Montreal were made. Based on issues of either bio-ethics or the effects of technological change, the dramas include stories about everything from the treatment of chronic-care patients to a comedy about the impact of word processors on writers.

Participants in the DramaLab program are working under the same demands as all independent filmmakers in Canada — a high level of excellence, Scott said. Scott, a veteran NFB producer and director, is president of Border Films Incorporated, a company owned by the NSI.

Bernard Dansereau is a 27-year-old Montreal native who is starting the third phase of DramaLab. He had experience in the Canadian film industry previously, but said the program has given him the chance to develop his expertise as a director of dramas.

He said the program is important because "it is very hard to get the chance to work with actors." Also he said DramaLab gives the opportunity to work with directors from other parts of Canada and see how other directors handle problems.

He said the program gave him a break from trying to convince people to give him a chance at directing drama, to learn instead.

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# *Le Déclin* leads in banner year for Canadian Academy

TORONTO — The predictable happened at the 1987 Genie awards. Director Denys Arcand's **The Decline of the American Empire** captured the most awards including the top prize for best movie.

The unpredictable also happened. Quebec director Arcand thanked Toronto film critics for helping make the film a success.

**Decline** took eight Genie awards including best original screenplay, best director, best supporting actor (Gabriel Arcand), best supporting actress (Louise Portal), best film editing, best sound and best sound editing.

Director Leon Marr's **Dancing in the Dark** was next in line with three Genie awards including best lead actress for Martha Henry's portrayal of a woman who strives to be the perfect housewife.

**Dancing in the Dark** also won best adapted screenplay and best art direction.

Gordon Pinsent captured best actor for his role as a miner forced to leave his life-long Newfoundland home in **John and the Missus**. The film also took best music score.

Léa Pool's feature **Anne Trister** also won two Genies. One for best cinematography and the other for best original song. **Loyalties**, set in Alberta and directed by Anne Wheeler, won best costume design.

Among those movies locked out of a Genie award was Yves Simoneau's thriller **Pouvoir intime**.

**Decline** producer René Malo later explained the importance Toronto critics played in building support for the movie, which is nominated for best foreign language film at the Oscars, March 30.

Toronto critics were really the ones spreading the news to all the others, Malo said.

"They really helped us to promote the film in Cannes," Malo told reporters. "After that, when we came back here, Toronto was the first place where the picture was seen by people that were not French speaking. The reception was so good it really helped us all around the world."

**Decline** also won the 1986 Golden Reel Award for its success at the box office. Malo said 1.2 million people have seen it in Canada. It captured \$3.3 million at the Canadian box office last year setting a Quebec record for a Canadian film with more than \$2.7 million in that province alone.

"Since the beginning I really believed that it would be a very, very popular film," Malo said.

He feels that the Canadian film as a whole has become stronger and the competition in the Genies was very good. "It proves, I think, that we really now have an industry in this country."

Arcand compared the Genie awards with the Oscars.

"Do you know anything

about tennis?" Arcand asked reporters.

"The guy who wins the Canadian championship is a pretty good tennis player." But the U.S. Open is an international competition, he added.

"Here it is only Canadian films. There it is films from other countries," Arcand said.

He added that in his years in the film industry he had never received an award for directing. "It's a first for me. It's really nice."

He drew laughs from the press entourage at the show when photographers asked him to hold one of his Genie awards higher and he asked

"What is the matter with your framing?"

Gordon Pinsent quietly expressed surprise at the sheer number of photographers and press waiting to interview him after his award.

He said there is a new admi-

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ration, pride and awareness in the making of Canadian films.

Pinsent spoke glowingly of the group that put **John and the Missus** together.

"They were on it because they wanted to be on it. It

wasn't a job of work. It wasn't the paycheck or anything and it was good to have that kind of atmosphere. You fight to have that - for people to believe in your thing so much that they would rather be there than anywhere."

Ronald Cohen, chairman of the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television, spoke

out in favour of support given the film industry by Canadian politicians.

He praised federal communications minister Flora MacDonald for her support of the industry. He declared "that Canadian culture is not negotiable" in a reference to the free trade talks with the United States.

Roger Frappier, who produced **Decline** with Malo, asked, "Who would have guessed that the **Decline of the American Empire** would mean the rise of the Canadian cinema?"

The Genie winners were voted by the 800 film division members of the Academy.

Here is the complete list of Genie winners:

- best motion picture - **Decline of the American Empire** - producers Rene Malo and Roger Frappier;
- best performance by an actor in a leading role - Gordon Pinsent in **John and the Missus**;
- best performance by an actress in a leading role - Martha Henry in **Dancing in the Dark**;
- best performance by an actor in a supporting role - Gabriel Arcand in **Decline of the American Empire**;
- best performance by an actress in a supporting role - Louise Portal in **Decline of the American Empire**;
- best achievement in art direction - Lillian Sarafinchan for **Dancing in the Dark**;
- best achievement in cinematography - Pierre Mignot for **Anne Trister**;
- best achievement in direction - Denys Arcand for **Decline of the American Empire**;
- best achievement for film editing - Monique Fortier for **Decline of the American Empire**;
- best achievement in costume design - Wendy Partridge for **Loyalties**;
- best music score - Michael Conway Baker for **John and the Missus**;
- best original song - Danielle Messia for the song "De la main gauche" in **Anne Trister**;
- best original screenplay - Denys Arcand for **Decline of the American Empire**;
- best adapted screenplay - Leon Marr for **Dancing in the Dark**;
- best achievement in overall sound - Richard Besse, Jean-Pierre Joutel and Adrian Croll for **Decline of the American Empire**;
- best achievement in sound editing - Paul Dion, Diane Boucher, and Andy Malcolm for **Decline of the American Empire**;
- best documentary - **Dads and Kids** - producer, Christian Bruyere;
- best live action short drama - **I Need A Man Like You To Make My Dreams Come True** - producers, Daria Stermac and Kalli Paakspuu;
- best animated short - **Get A Job** - producers, Derek Mazur, Michael Scott and Brad Caslor;
- **The 1986 Golden Reel Award** - **Decline of the American Empire**;
- **The Air Canada Award** for outstanding contributions to the business of filmmaking in Canada - Garth Drabinsky;
- **Outstanding Canadian Film Achievement of Expo '86** - **Taming of the Demons**, produced by Paul Krivicky, created and directed by Emil Radok.

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# Drabinsky honoured with Air Canada merit award

TORONTO – Garth Drabinsky, the head of North America's largest movie exhibition chain, says he is committed to giving Canadian movies the broadest exposure to screens in both Canada and beyond its borders.

Drabinsky, president of Toronto-based Cineplex-Odeon Corporation, made the comments after receiving the Air Canada award for his contributions to the filmmaking business in Canada.

"Movies produced by Canadians are attracting more and more attention at Cannes and Hollywood and wherever else pictures are judged by their merits," Drabinsky told the crowd gathered for the 1987 Genie awards.

With a growing crew of skilled Canadians, filmmakers from all over the world choose to make pictures here, he said.

"I find myself acting more and more as a bridge – as an interpreter of one faction to another – particularly in the case of government and business, in the hope of reconciling our country's legitimate concerns for its cultural heritage and its national identity."

He talked of the "almost overwhelming" influence of Canada's neighbour to the south.

Drabinsky was co-founder of the Cineplex-Odeon Corporation, which pioneered the multi-screen-concept theatre. He also runs Canada's largest independent film distributor and Canada's largest film studio complex.

Drabinsky has produced six feature films including Genie award winning *The Changing* and *The Silent Partner*.

"My roots are in production. Tonight my heart is still here as

well."

Drabinsky said that he had dreamed of making more and better films, but in 1981 business realities turned his attention elsewhere.

"Tonight brings back the in-

comparable thrills and satisfaction that comes from the creative process of making motion pictures."

"I want to state publicly my profound commitment... to see that Canadian motion pictures

are given the broadest possible exposure."

Later he explained to reporters that the Canadian film industry has matured.

"It has taken 20 years since the inception of the Canadian

Film Development Corporation for the base of talent to evolve to the quality level that it now possesses."

"We are not frightened anymore of our stories that relate to this country."

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## Go: Formule 1

MONTREAL – Quebec producer Claude Héroux (*Lance et Compte / He Shoots He Scores*) has announced the April shooting of *Formula 1*, a \$13 million Canada-France television co-production.

This 13-hour dramatic series about the fast-lane lives of international racing car drivers will be directed by Nardo Castillo and Jacques Ertaud. Executive producers are Claude Héroux for Communications Claude Héroux and Jean-Daniel Verhaeghe for Vamp Productions (France).

*Formula 1* will be filmed in both French and English. Principal shooting will take place in North America, Europe and Japan.



# Cannes fortnight takes two Apprenticeships for 16 students

MONTREAL – Two Canadian feature films have been selected for screening at the the 19th Directors' Fortnight at the Cannes Film Festival, May 7 to 19.

**Un Zoo la nuit** directed by Jean-Claude Lauzon for Oz Productions (Montreal) and **I've Heard the Mermaids Singing** directed by Patricia Rozema for Vos Productions Inc. (Toronto) have been selected from a field of 21 Canadian features.

In early March, Pierre-Henri Deleau, director of the Director's Fortnight visited Montreal where he viewed 21 Canadian features submitted to the Telefilm Canada offices prior to the March 4 deadline.

Held in the 1,500 seat Palais Croisette, the Directors' Fortnight is a non-competitive parallel section of the festival with an independent management. Approximately 20 films will be shown four times, with different schedules and dates.

The Directors' Fortnight is sponsored by the Société des Réalisateurs de Films (France).

In 1986, 14 Canadian features were submitted to Telefilm for screening. Of these, Le

**Déclin de l'empire américain** and **Dancing in the Dark** were selected.

VANCOUVER – The sixth annual Vancouver International Film Festival will be held Oct. 15-31, 1987.

Organizers say the traditional May/June dates have been changed to coincide with the Commonwealth Summit Conference to be held in Vancouver.

Accordingly, this year's festival will focus on Commonwealth films. The festival will include an industry trade forum, a Canadian tribute evening as well as a new program called Critics Choice in which internationally renowned critics present their chosen films. A critics' seminar will also be initiated this year.

Along with a gala program of films from the U.S., Europe and Latin America, other festival program features are: The Worlds of Asia with a spotlight on the Cinema of India, Canadian Images, Cinema of Great Britain, Cinema of Australia and New Zealand.

TORONTO – Narrowed from a field of almost 200 applicants across Canada, 16 winners of the first National Apprenticeship Training Program have been named.

The winners will work 16 weeks as film apprentices at a weekly salary of \$250 under the program which is largely funded by Employment and Immigration Canada.

John Edwards, associate deputy-minister of Employment and Immigration, said the federal government will put more than \$200,000 in the next three years into the program.

One of the major reasons for the government's financial support of the program is the strength of the cultural sector in creating jobs, Edwards told a Toronto press conference.

The National Apprenticeship Training Program was modelled on a city of Toronto apprenticeship award launched in 1984 and is administered by the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television.

Toronto Mayor Art Eggleton, at an earlier press conference, lauded the program because it not only strengthens the cultural fabric of the community,

but also because it is good investment.

"Something we started has now become something bigger and better," Eggleton said.

The program will provide 16 weeks of experience in any area of the film and television industry preferred for the post-secondary students selected.

The Ontario winners are Mitra Sen, Glenn Warner, Frank Ramirez, Christopher McNamara, Yvon Ipperciel, Sue Quon and David Morton.

The winners in Quebec are Rafael Reyes Luna, Marie Cayer and Jeanne Crépeau and in Atlantic Canada, they are Kimberlee McTaggart and Christopher Richardson. In western Canada the winners are Michael Rohl and Steve Meikle and in British Columbia, they are Patrick Payne and Daria Elerman.

Funding is also provided by Telefilm Canada, the Ontario Film Development Corporation and the city of Toronto.

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E A S T E R N W A V E

by Chris Majka

The groundhog must have been able to see its shadow – it was a beautiful sunny day when February crept over the horizon – if it was able to dig through the enormous drifts all over the ground, that is. And I thought the Europeans were getting it bad this winter. Maybe this just proves that Newfoundland is part of Europe after all. Anyway, if only I could remember what it means if the Goundhog does see its shadow perhaps I could forecast... Oh, never mind.

Speaking of shadows, the Dutch production of **Mind Shadows** has completed principal photography in Cape Breton and Halifax. **Mind Shadows** is director Heddy Honigmann's screen adaptation of a well-known Dutch novel. It tells the story of a Dutch couple who retire to a rural area of Canada and the consequences they face when the husband learns he has Alzheimer's disease. Although a Dutch production, Imagex's Chris Zimmer served as a producer and all round production co-ordinator both before and during the shoot. Goedege-lück, Heddy!

The crew from Salter Street Films have also returned. They were in Argentina for two months shooting the most recent Donovan survival epic, **Normanicus**. According to second unit cinematographer Les Kriszan, the fine volcanic dust which blew everywhere was one of the biggest problems. Hundreds of bottles of compressed air were consumed in a vain battle to keep the stuff out of the camera gear. Nevertheless, the lab reports on the developed footage are good, although Kriszan himself hasn't seen any of it since it was shipped back to Canada for processing and he was forced to shoot 'blind' for the entire time. Reports say Producer Paul Donovan will soon be going to Toronto to begin the mammoth job of editing the footage. Buena suerte, Paulo!

Kriszan's continuing interest in the cinema of his native Hungary has lead him to become an observer on the next film that Academy-Award-winning director Istvan Szabo (of **Mephisto** and **Colonel Redl** fame) is shooting with frequent collaborator Klaus Maria Brandauer. It is scheduled to start production in April in

Budapest and Berlin. Kriszan will be along as a Canadian observer anxious to see how they light, shoot, and direct films in the 'Hungarian School'. He is hoping to parley some of this experience, and his own very considerable background as a cinematographer, into a project of his own. He's written a script for a feature drama of a shipwrecked sailor on Sable Island which he is trying to fund. "It's like trying to get water out of a stone," he told me, referring to recent funding negotiations, but he's not giving up. Knowing Les, I'm already getting ready to see it on the screen. Sok szerencset, Les!

In Halifax, developments are no less interesting. Three local producers have banded together and formed a new production company called Brenton Films to produce a series of made-for-television films

called **Brenton Street Stories**. The three are Chris Zimmer of Imagex, Ralph Holt of Media Co-op Services, and Charlotte Harper of MediaFix. Script development has already begun, in cooperation with CBC and Telefilm, on ten scripts, six of which they hope to produce in the summer and fall of '87. According to Brenton Street, "this collection of stories will be contemporary, reflecting an urban Maritime reality seldom portrayed on television." Sounds interesting to me. Good luck, Breton Street!

Out of the can and racing for the screen is Glen Walton's **The Nova Scotia Song**, a documentary on the life and work of Nova Scotia's folk historian, Dr. Helen Creighton. The premiere was held on February 19 (the film was originally, to have appeared at the Atlantic Festival Atlantique in October but technical problems prevented it from doing so) and included a screening of the

1957 NFB documentary about Dr. Creighton collecting folk-songs called **Songs of Nova Scotia**, and extracts from **The Collector**, a musical based on the life and work of Dr. Creighton which is currently running at the Halifax Citadel. The whole evening was sponsored by the newly formed Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Atlantic (CFDA) as part of its program of promoting independent film and video producers of the Atlantic Provinces.

Intrepid Cape Breton filmmaker, entrepreneur, and raconteur Neal Livingstone has got another film project on the roll. This winter he's been pounding the corridors with a project called **John Nesbitt** about the monumental sculptor of the same name who makes his home on the Margaree in Cape Breton. CBC has now issued him a broadcast letter and he is continuing his rounds to try and raise the remaining funding. Plans call for

production to begin on May 1 and for the half-hour documentary to be ready for delivery to the CBC by September 1 (whew, there ain't no flies on that boy!). It will be shot in 16mm and edited right in Mabou where Livingston lives, rubbing shoulders with fellow filmmaker Robert Frank and Walter Delory (is there a 'Cape Breton School' of filmmaking in the offing?).

Opening the papers last week I saw that **John and the Missus**, **Children of a Lesser God**, and **Faustus Bidgood**, where all playing simultaneously (in addition to Chuck Clarke's **Eight Frames Per Second** running as a short, I might add). Gosh, it gives you a certain sense of optimism seeing all that made-in-Canada film up there on the screens at once. All that **Atlantic** film up there on the silver screen – I had to wipe a tear from my eye. So, before I break down sobbing, that's all for now from the east coast.

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MONTREAL – Donald Brittain's television special on the life of William Lyon Mackenzie King is shooting on locations in Montreal until mid-May.



## Watkins, unofficial Canadians in Berlin spotlight event

MONTREAL – The Berlin Film Festival, Feb. 20 to March 3, saw Peter Watkins' 14 1/2-hour peace epic *The Journey* and loved it, says Jan Rofekamp, of Les Films Transit Inc.

"It was the event of the festival," says Rofekamp who, with world rights in hand, is currently negotiating sales in 12 different markets.

The film, produced and directed by British filmmaker Peter Watkins and co-produced by the Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society, was shot in 15 different countries with an extraordinary degree of Canadian participation in terms of private funding and production work.

*The Journey*, which went into development in 1982, raises a plethora of peace related issues in 45 to 50 minute thematic modules. It was produced on a slim budget of \$2.3 million, incorporating the use of live action footage, graphics, computerization, and animation, and was shot in 10 different languages.

Close to 30 Canadian filmmakers worked on a voluntary basis. Deferred salaries and monies raised privately in Canada towards the budget, amount to an estimated \$900,000.

However, Telefilm Canada declined participation due to a lack of Canadian film certification, according to the film's producers.

In Berlin, *The Journey* played four times (three afternoons per full screening) in the non-competitive Forum section of the festival. The international press was highly positive, says Rofekamp, and commended Watkins, more than once, for his "courage" to undertake and complete such a massive logistic and deeply serious project.

"The critics took an intelligent approach and there was no flack about the length of the film," says Rofekamp.

Watkins and many of the Canadian filmmakers with a credit on the film were in attendance for this world premier.

## Swatch backs five shorts

TORONTO – Five Canadian independent short movies will be distributed to commercial movie houses as part of the 1987 Swatch Showcase.

The showcase aims to introduce the public to innovative short films by Canadians and help film production by providing technical, marketing and promotional services to winners.

A total of 61 short films were submitted for assessment by jury, an Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television press release states.

The five winners receive a \$3,000 honorarium and their films will be blown up to 35mm for commercial release through the Canadian Motion Pictures Distributors Association.

The winners are:  
 – James Stuart of Toronto for *A Symphony of Toys*;  
 – Christopher McNamara from University of Windsor for *Tatoo*;  
 – Betty Spackman from Toronto's Sheridan College for *A Bird in the Hand*;  
 – Jacqueline McClintock from Concordia University in Montreal for *Porter and Sabu*;  
 – Wendy Tilby from Emily Carr College of Art and Design for *Tables of Content*.

The Swatch Showcase of Canadian Independent Short Films is run by the Academy and the Canadian Film Institute. Previously it was called the Canadian Independent Short Film Showcase.

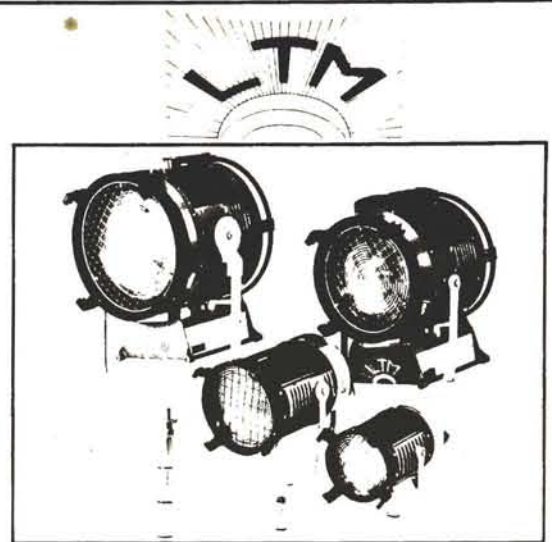
## Every Dog also Berlin best

MONTREAL – *Every Dog's Guide to Complete Home Safety*, directed by Les Drew and produced by the National Film Board of Canada, has won the UNICEF prize for best short film in the Films for Children category at the Berlin International Film Festival.

This 10-minute short was nominated for a 1986 Genie and is currently playing in U.S. theatres, part of an 88-minute film entitled *American Celebration*, featuring a wide variety of recent animated shorts.

*Get a Job*, also an NFB animated short, won the 1986 Genie for best animated short.

MONTREAL – *Ô Picasso*, a documentary by Gilles Carle, will reach an estimated 750 million viewers when it is broadcast throughout China sometime this year. The film was selected by the CBS International Broadcast Group to be shown on CCTV.



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**ON (EXPERIMENTAL) FILM**

by B. Sternberg

Toronto has been teaming with film! While not all presentations have been of experimental films, the wealth of screenings at 'other' venues is making for a film-aware environment and public. A great number of the film events have involved experimental film; some exclusively, some in combination with other genres. What is interesting is the variety in venues, programming strategies, curators – the where, how, when, by whom, and for what of the various screenings.

For example, the Bloor Cinema, one of the Festival chain of rep cinemas in Toronto, screened *Scissere*, a feature-length experimental film by Peter Mettler. It also presented a selection of Joyce

Wieland's films and, for the second year in a row, housed *The Best of the Fest*, a selection of the films distributed by the Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution Centre that were premiered at the Toronto Festival Of Festivals.

A five-week series of experimental films was offered free at the Ontario College of Art. This series, organized and curated by Carol Laing, featured informal discussion following each screening with one of the filmmakers whose work was shown. The screenings were open to the public, though its main audience was the OCA student body. This series continued the "Art and Politics" program which last year had taken the form of lecture and discussion. Carol Laing de-

cidied this year to follow the films, loosely selected under headings or themes, by round table discussion.

Stan Brakhage was present at Ryerson, as part of the Kodak Chair series, a new annual program. This year Ryerson invited three filmmakers (Margarethe Von Trotta, Stan Brakhage and Norman Jewison) and three photographers to present their work and a talk.

An eight-part series *Transformations: Formal Invention in Documentary*, curated by William Beattie and Marc Glassman, is being screened at four different venues alternately (A Space, an artist-run centre; The Funnel experimental film theatre; OCA, an art college, and The Rivoli, a club which regularly offers music, poetry readings and the like to patrons at round tables sipping wine or beer). The program includes several experimental

films in the offerings of documentaries of all sorts.

Centrestage Forum at The St. Lawrence Centre, under the guidance of Patterson Higgins, is presenting two evenings with filmmakers, one with Rick Hancox and the other with Michael Snow, entitled *New Perspectives in Canadian Cinema*. Centrestage provides a forum for public awareness on many social issues. Patterson Higgins was enthusiastic to take on this educative initiative in the area of experimental film, realizing that, despite its long history, experimental films are relatively unknown to the general public. Although, for example, Michael Snow was recently awarded the Toronto Arts Award and is an artist of international reputation, most people are unaware of his film work – many of those who have heard of *Wavelength* have never actually seen it!

Toronto's two major art gal-

eries, The Art Gallery of Ontario and The Art Gallery at Harbourfront, are both involved with experimental film this spring: Joyce Wieland's retrospective at The Art Gallery of Ontario includes screenings of all her films. This exhibition will tour Canada. In May, several programs of experimental films which were made in Toronto during the last ten years, have been selected by Blaine Allen, and will be presented as part of the opening exhibition of the new Harbourfront Art Gallery. A lot of film, various venues and a number of independent curators – great! Is it this busy, film-wise, elsewhere in the country? Let us know.

Congratulations to Rick Hancox and Carolyn McLuskie who shared first prize in the recent Festival sponsored by the Chicago Experimental Film Coalition. Interestingly (coincidentally?) Rick's film *Beach Events* was shot on the shores of PEI, and Carolyn's featured the Pacific coast – *ab mare usque ad mare*, alright!

Does the word 'co-op' in the names of the various production co-ops around have anything to do with the word 'co-operation' my son learned on *Sesame Street*? As in working together, helping those who need assistance, sharing? It's hard enough to work to make a living and then make films on the side (if you've managed to get the money together to make a film), but to then have the very co-ops which are government-funded and equipped to make the production of low, low, low budget, non-commercial, independent films possible, put obstacles in one's way,... well, I don't know, but maybe they need to look again at their names. Ironically, the conditions (hence, delays) put on access are made in the very name of the co-operative way; co-operative, that is, on the part of the member-filmmakers who are required to put in volunteer time to merit the use of the equipment. I can understand the desire for a co-operative spirit and that certain jobs need doing by volunteers. My point is, I guess, that the main purpose of production co-ops is to facilitate the making of films by independent filmmakers who meet the eligibility of non-commerciality and that a feeling of co-operation might arise in a more genuine way from filmmakers who have been welcomed openly, helped to do their work and, then, feeling at home, will pitch in to scrub the floors, man the doors, etc. I sure would, if I could only 'get in' in the first place!

Barbara Sternberg •

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## FRONTS WEST

by Kathryn Allison

March seems to have been dedicated to the American Film Market, with everyone busy preparing to go down to Los Angeles or recovering from having been there. Those of us who were left behind could only imagine the din of television moguls screaming. "Buy, buy! No - sell, sell!" echoing through those Beverly Hills hotel corridors. But with all the regulars away, there was time to discover something new and, quite possibly, very wild on the Vancouver film scene.

Talk Art Productions Ltd. is a local production company which has been around since 1984, but hasn't received much attention in spite of its refreshing, stylish approach to entertainment. The first I heard of it was through Phil Savath who is currently working on a new wave action comedy for them called **Ricochet**. Telefilm is in on the development of the feature which Talk Art producer John Conti describes as a classic fugitive story in the style of **Repo Man**, **After Hours** and **Something Wild**.

The intriguing thing about the project is the eclectic mix of talent it is attracting. Peter Breck (Nick on **The Big Valley**) and Jello Biafra (lead singer of the **Dead Kennedys**) are the leads. Tobias Schliesler, talented local cinematographer, will be director of photography, and Jim Knowles (**Time Bandit**, **Dune**) will head the art department. The

soundtrack won't be muzak - Conti has **DOA** committed to writing a couple of original songs, and Jim Cummings (**I Braineater** and **No Means No**) will also lend their talents to the track. It's no surprise that Conti and co-producer David Heffel will make a rock video to accompany the \$1.2 million film. With Telefilm and Cineplex-Odeon showing strong interest in the feature, it's got some powerful allies in financing and distribution. They plan to shoot it in July.

Talk Art also has an interest in experimental low-budget gore movies in the style of Ray Denis Steckler's **Rat Fink A Boo Boo** and Herschel Gordon Lewis' **Blood Feast**. It looks like it's going to be a fun summer...

Zorah Productions is also busy. Two features in development (a murder mystery called **Killing Mr. Griffin** and producer Ed Richardson's personal favourite, a drama called **Green Sky**) and has already found distribution for a comedy series with ex-Edmontonian Bob Comfort.

Phil Savath is also writing for Northern Lights Media. He has just finished the first draft of an adaptation of Morley Torgov's novel **The Outside Chance of Maximilian Glick**.

Producer Stephen Foster hopes to shoot the \$1.5 million feature in Manitoba next fall. Richard Davis (the transplanted Australian who's involved with Petra Films' feature **Visa**) is line producer on

**Glick**. Financial participants are BCTV, CBC-Winnipeg and Telefilm Canada.

Northern Lights is also developing a half hour sitcom pilot with CBC Vancouver and Telefilm. **Jingles** is set in Vancouver and deals with the

"early and crazy days in building a jingle company." It's being scripted by Myles Ramsey and Peter Clarke.

Primetime Productions (Geoff Groberman) is shooting a three-part comedy pilot in April called **Comedy College**.

Writer Phil Savath describes it as a new kind of comedy show that involves stand up comics and audience participation, with prizes thrown in. The concept was tried live at Expo last summer to enthusiastic response.

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## LETTER FROM LONDON

by Stephen Challis

A significant restructuring of the broadcasting and telecommunications industries is underway in France, brought on by the election in March '86 of Jacques Chirac as Prime Minister and the transfer of power in the National Assembly to a Gaullist/Giscardian coalition. Shortly after the election, the French government announced a series of proposals which will see the privatization of TF1, currently the largest publicly-owned network, and the transfer of ownership of La Cinq and TV6, two smaller privately owned networks.

The most recent development in the series of steps that will lead to the restructuring has been the government's issuance of a new *cahier des charges*: these are a set of regulations that govern program content and affect matters such as language, country of production and mode of filming. According to reports appearing in the United Kingdom press, 60 per cent of TF1's total programming will have to be of French or European Economic Council origin and of this programming, a minimum of 250 hours per annum will have to be new French documentary or fiction. This quota for new production is roughly one-half the number of hours devoted by TF1 to new French work during '85.

For La Cinq and TV6 the *cahier des charges* are less restrictive than those for TF1, evidently because their owners are seen as being less able to bear the costs of higher rates of domestic production. However, within two years the smaller networks have to bring their programming into line with standards set for TF1.

According to reports appearing in the UK, the announcement of the *cahier des charges* is timed to assist the decisions of the financiers who have made bids, or who are considering making bids, to the French government. A number of business groups from France, Italy and the UK are reported to be vying for the right to buy one of the networks.

A number of Canadian directors have stopped in London in recent months to promote their new films.

In November, Leon Marr attended a preview screening of his film, *Dancing in the Dark*, at the Canada House Cultural Centre. The event was hosted by the Ontario Ministry

of Citizenship and Culture, the Canadian High Commission and the film's UK distributors, New World Pictures, Ltd.

Before its screening in London, *Dancing in the Dark* was shown at film festivals in Europe, at Mannheim (West Germany), Paris (France), Valladolid (Spain) and, after London, went to a festival in Portugal.

Michael Jones, co-director of *The Adventure of Faustus Bidgood*, screened his film for invited members of the press and various prospective distributors for the film in late November '86, at Canada House. Earlier in the month the film was screened at the second annual Dublin Film Festival.

David Cronenberg attended a question and answer session open to the public, also held at Canada House, after the London Film Festival screening of his most recent feature film *The Fly*. It was one of three films by Canadian directors shown in the festival; Léa Pool's *Ann Trister*, and Harry Rasky's *Karsh - The Searching eye* were the other two.

David Cronenberg has received a lot of attention lately in the British press, concomitant with *The Fly*'s London opening on February 13. Both *Time Out* and *City Limits*, the largest entertainment listings magazines in London ran two-page interviews with him. Also, on February 9, the English TV network, Channel 4, aired *The Eleventh Hour: Long Live The New Flesh*, a 90-minute documentary which examined Cronenberg's career to date.

In the month since *The Fly*'s commercial release, it has grossed over two million Canadian dollars and remains the city's most popular film.

Donald Sutherland travelled to London's National Film Theatre (NFT) on January 13 to give a *Guardian* lecture, sponsored by the British national newspaper of the same name. His lecture coincided with a film series at the NFT which reviewed his work in cinema. The NFT film series also coincided with Canada House screenings of a group of films by Canadian directors in which Sutherland played leading roles.

On January 27 the Ontario government hosted a preview screening of *A Judgement in Stone*, directed by Ousama Rawi. The film then went into general release in London and closed a week later.

Europe's newest English language cable TV channel began broadcasting from London on

January 30 to more than five million homes across the continent. Super Channel, owned by the UK ITV companies and the Virgin Group, joins the growing list of English-language channels sent to viewers via satellite and cable link. At least seven other English-lan-

guage channels, six of them thematic and one of them general programming, are received in varying parts of Europe. Reception of the Channels vary throughout Europe depending on the satellite coverage area and the availability of cable links. The

most extensive cable networks exist in the northern European countries, also the countries with the highest viewership of English-language satellite TV. By the end of 1987 close to 12 million homes in Europe will be receiving the English-language channels.

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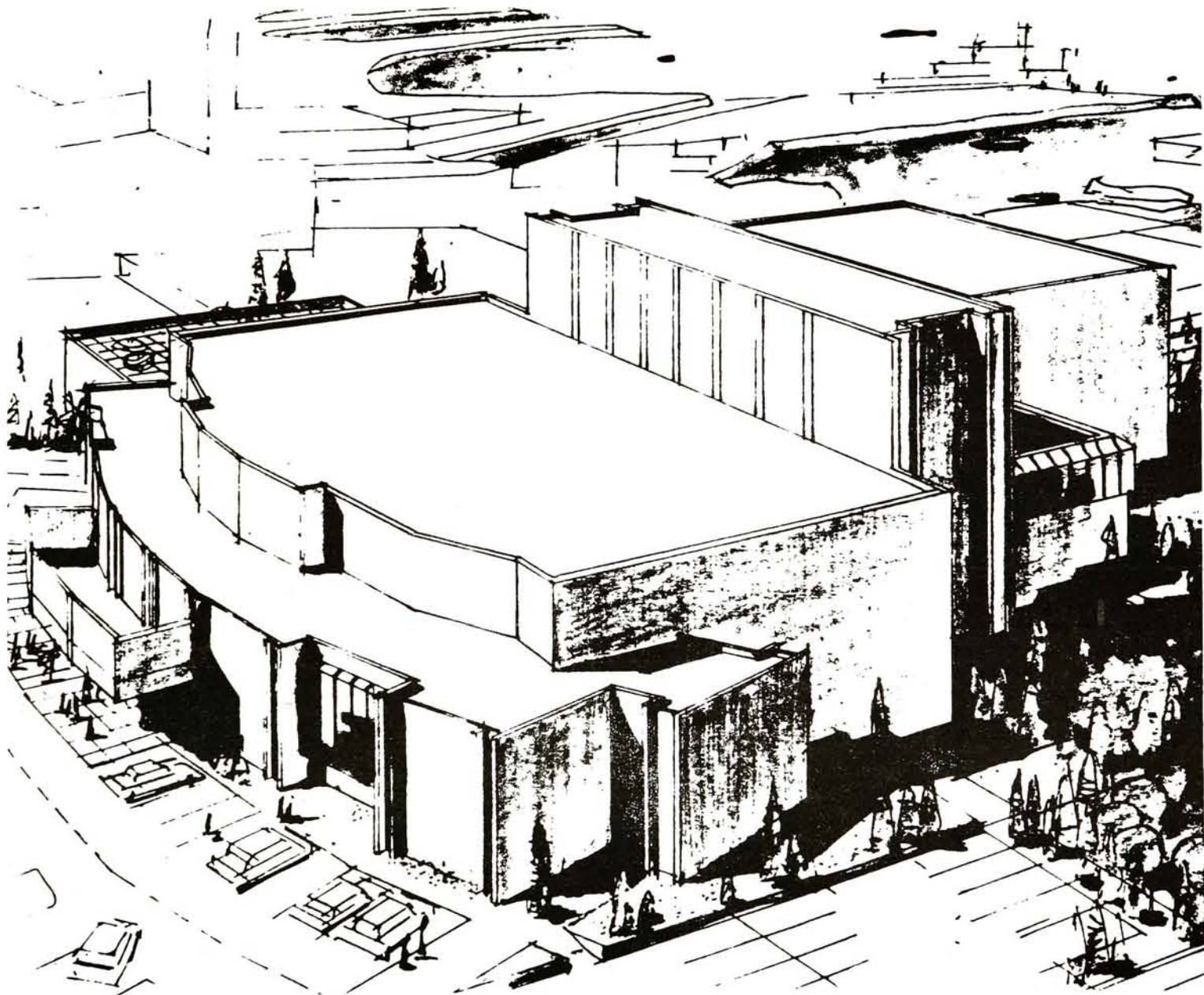
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