

## Scanners tops March pics

TORONTO — *My Bloody Valentine* was the top Canadian grosser in the past three weeks, garnering \$764,000 in its first three frames in Canada. But those figures are not as rosy as they seem. According to Bob Yankovich of Paramount, *Valentine*, which opened in 69 situations, had fallen to ten by its third week.

The American figures for the horror flick reveal an almost equally drastic dropoff, from \$805,000 in its first week to \$350,000 in its second, despite spreading from eight to fifteen keys. However, these figures total close to \$2 million for the low-budget shocker. It has not been announced what that will translate to in terms of film rentals to the distributors.

*Scanners*, girding for its late March breaks in Western Canada and Montreal, brought in \$325,000 in its fifth and sixth week from two American keys, Chicago and Philadelphia.

Unlike *Valentine*, *Scanners* has benefited from good press in Canada and the U.S., including profiles of writer-director

David Cronenberg in *Newsweek* and *Today*.

The oddity among Canadian releases is *The Haunting of Julia*, a two year old Canadian horror film, originally called *Full Circle*. The Julian Melzack production, toplining Mia Farrow, is currently in one American city, Washington, where it has quietly racked up \$36,000 in three weeks in one theatre.

On the French language track, two films are currently playing Toronto — Genie contenders *Les bons débarras* and *L'homme à tout faire*.

Figures are recently unavailable for *L'homme*, but *Les bons* has opened strongly in two situations, The International and The Eaton's Cineplex. First week figures for the International are a tidy \$9,576, with second frame estimates at \$8,300.

At Cineplex, the melodrama grossed \$4,294 first week, with estimates at \$3,900 for the second.

Total two week figures for *Les bons* should come to \$26,000 in Toronto.

## Cultural review preview at Cdn Image

PETERBOROUGH — A group of independent and experimental filmmakers presented statements to Louis Applebaum, co-chairman of the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee at the Canadian Images Festival.

Representing a spectrum of the non-commercial industry, the independent attitudes ranged from refusal to participate in the Cultural Review Committee to demands for a serious commitment to film as an art in Canada.

John Doyle, representing the Independent Film Alliance du Cinema Indépendant, stated that the only role "of the federal government should be to remove blocks, to facilitate the artists' work." He further asserted that the primary goal was "to facilitate the growing expression of indigenous Canadian culture and not to aid colonial or centralist concerns."

Doyle wanted to see the role of the Canada Council expand-

ed and to see the development of a parallel system of distribution for independent filmmakers.

The second speaker, François Dupuis of L'Association Vidéo et Cinéma du Québec (AVECQ), stated that his organization had decided to decline to participate in the hearings, because "at a moment when Pierre Elliot Trudeau plans to enforce his personal vision of an imaginary country, we cannot give to this prince our collective vision of hope and our individual visions as cultural workers... We cannot imagine our culture being controlled by a political elite."

Striking a note that was to be repeated by many members of the Think Tank, Dupuis added "maybe you're right to do it, maybe it's the time to do it, but maybe it's too late."

Bob Verrall, of the Council of Canadian Filmmakers, noting that "a country cannot buy its image on the world market" demanded that CBC-2, if it is licenced, be used as a showcase for Canadian independents, not as a collection of reruns and talking-head programs. Interestingly, Verrall's demands sounded very close to what Pat Ferns, president of the Canadian Film and Television Association (CFTA) has been saying since the announcement of the planned second network.

Al Razutis of the Association of Canadian Film Artists, an experimental filmmaker of some note, was the most concise of the panelists, listing his demands in point form — requests that funding of independent and experimental funding be organized through a "jury of peers," that taxation of all non-Canadian films be introduced, with the monies there obtained going to indigenous film production, and that the archival needs of the experimental and independent film artist be met.

All of the panelists had strong aversions to the Hollywood North syndrome, and all expressed fear that film as an

artform would be dead within this country in a very short time — estimates ranging from two to five years.

The replies to the panel came from Louis Applebaum, co-chairman of the Review Committee and Tom Simons, one of its members. They were virtually non-replies, acknowledging the seriousness of the issues and the need to look at all points of view. The only moment of drama came when Simons, addressing François Dupuis' statement regarding Trudeau's personal vision, noted that the Review would not be taking place without the support of seventy members of parliament from Quebec.

Dupuis, who had been speaking in French, translated by Louise Carré, switched to English, his voice choked with emotion, and stated that "the support of Trudeau by the Quebec MP's was 'their shame, not Quebec's.'"

Audience response to the seminar was mixed. There were few questions when the discussion was opened for the audience. One observer noted that "I'm sick of these panels about film where there is nobody from distribution or exhibition."

It was, in effect, a dress rehearsal for the Applebaum Commission, which begins its public hearings next month.

## Argentina gives warm welcome

BUENOS AIRES — According to trade reports, two Canadian films have made the top twenty grossing films in the first five weeks of the year in Argentina.

Filmplan's *Dirty Tricks* has grabbed \$32,219, placing it eleventh on the list. It is followed by Astral's *Deathship*, which has pulled in \$12,738 during the first five weeks of 1981.

## T.O. grant for feasibility study

TORONTO — The Toronto City Council has made a grant of \$20,000 to the city's Film Liaison Officer. About \$5000 of that will go to help finance a feasibility study for the proposed Guild Hall in Toronto, as reported in Cine Mag No. 57. The Office had originally requested \$10,000, but is expecting to receive the other portion of the grant from the Metropolitan Toronto Cultural Affairs Department.

According to Toronto Film Liaison Officer Naish McHugh there have been legal problems with the grant. According

to the Municipalities Act, the government is not supposed to be involved in the financing of private enterprise. As a result, the money from the city will be administered as part of the Film Liaison Office's budget, with a city representative sitting on the steering committee.

The other \$15,000 of the grant will be used, half in the promotion of Toronto as a film location and as the capital of the Canadian Film Industry, and half to sponsor events at the Trade Forum at the Festival and similar industry gatherings.

## I N T R A N S I T

Nada Harcourt has been named Head of Children's Programming at the CBC. She succeeds Dodi Robb, who was recently appointed CBC Director for the Maritime Provinces.

Harcourt has worked in children's television for a number of years at the network. Previously she was manager of program production, with responsibility for the production, planning and procurement of children's programming.

Also at the senior web, Margaret Lyons, Program Director for the CBC's Radio Service for the past six years, has been named to co-ordinate a study to determine the long term future of the Radio service. The survey will attempt to gather the best thinking in and outside of the CBC to arrive at sensible options for the radio network.

Gerry Flahive has been appointed to act as liaison between the National Film Board and Toronto educational and cultural organizations. Prior to his appointment to the NFB position, Flahive was a freelance writer and researcher and worked as Assistant to the Film Co-ordinator for Toronto Harbourfront. Also at the NFB, Alain Poirier has been appointed to work with the Ontario Francophone community, promoting the utilization of NFB films and Services. Poirier formerly worked for Le Théâtre du Nouvel Ontario in Sudbury.

Zinat Nuraney, formerly of JWT Direct Advertising, has assumed the post of advertising

manager at 20th Century-Fox in Toronto. Dinah Hoyle has left her position at Pan-Canadian.

Yorkville Studio Centre has announced that its subsidiary, VTR Productions Limited and The Video House has become exclusive duplicators and distributors in Canada for Home Theatre and Wizard Video of Los Angeles.

René Clair, the great French film director, died in Paris at age 82. Clair, whose career predated sound, was one of the central figures in the medium's movement into talkies, with such films as *A Nous La Liberté*, (which Chaplin rifled liberally for *Modern Times*), *Le Million*, a comic operetta about a missing lottery ticket, and *Sous Les Toits de Paris*.

E.Y. (Yip) Harburg, the songwriter who penned the lyrics to "Over the Rainbow" died in Los Angeles at the age of 82 in an automobile accident. Harburg, whose collaborators included Jerome Kern, Ira Gershwin and Harold Arlen, was awarded an Oscar for that song and wrote for numerous other movies and stage plays, including *Finian's Rainbow*. Bosley Crowther, for forty years the most powerful film critic in America, has passed on at the age of 79. Crowther, who held down the first string movie slot at the *New York Times* until his retirement in 1967, held a make-or-break power over foreign films and, often, domestic films that were released during his tenure.

Michael Maltese, the Warner Brothers writer who collaborated with cartoonist Chuck Jones to create the "Roadrunner" series of cartoons is dead in Los Angeles at 73. During his long career at WB, he worked on such cartoon characters as Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck. In the sixties, he worked at Hanna Barbera to help create The Flintstones and Quick Draw McGraw. His last film was *The Bugs Bunny/Road Runner Movie*, with Jones.

Ketti Frings, screenwriter and novelist, has passed away in Los Angeles. Awarded the Pulitzer Prize for her stage adaptation of *Look Homeward, Angel*, she also scripted Mitchell Leisen's *Hold Back the Dawn*, Robert Siodmak's *The File On Thelma Jordan*, and the film adaptation of *Come Back, Little Sheba*. She was 71.

Eleanor Perry, screenwriter and novelist, has died of cancer at the age of 66 in New York. Her screenplays included *David and Lisa* for which she received an Oscar nomination, *Diary of a Mad Housewife*, and *The Swimmer*. Her novel, *Blue Pages*, was published in 1977. Robert L. Wolfe, one of the finest of modern day film editors, passed away in Los Angeles after a battle with cancer. His films included groundbreaking work for Sam Peckinpah, on *The Wild Bunch*, *The Getaway* and *Junior Bonner*, as well as work on *All the President's Men*, and his Oscar nominated work for the editing of *The Rose*.