

## • Co-productions and Canada

# Better balance, better deal

by Brendan Hawley

five percent of each other. This means that the money raised by each producer has gone to his home industry. Furthermore, it should mean that the home industry, having put up half the money should get half the creative elements, half the cast and half the technicians. However since these figures cannot be exact, Mixed Commissions have to review them and mutually decide whether the results are acceptable."

Canada's first co-production treaty was signed with France in 1963, when the Canadian feature film industry was still just a twinkle in a director's camera lens. The CFDC nursed along interest in these projects, cooing that our creative participation would increase as Canadians gained experience and creative finesse. "The opportunity to work with more experienced producers abroad, the access to additional financial resources and the prospect of larger audiences," were the benefits of such participation, according to the CFDC in 1969.

Today, Canada has agreements with five countries and has participated in 52 projects altogether—thirteen of them in the last two years. While most Canadians accepted the concept of minority participation as a penitential prelude to acquiring their celluloid cachets, that perception has changed dramatically within the last few years.

Sandra Gathercole, an executive member of the CCFM, explained: "Everyone was fully prepared to accept the theory that the balance had to be cumulative, it didn't have to be within each film; but, the problem was that by using that argument it tended to prolong the imbalance."

Both the CCFM and the CFDC booklets contain elaborate statistical tables which gauge the ebb and flow of Canadian participation in these projects since 1963. Most of the activity has really been concentrated in the last five years

though, with 31 films being produced since 1976.

Canadian creative contributions to the French and British treaties have been loosely balanced with our financial contributions. Under the French treaty, 15 films were made since 1976 and our average financial and creative participation rates were 43 and 41 percent respectively. During that same time period, 13 films were made with the U.K. Our contributions in this case were 39 and 40 percent.

Canada's treaty with Italy has resulted in three films; although our financial contribution stands at 26 percent, the creative input wobbles at seven.

Finally, as the CFDC reported: "The Treaty with Israel has only worked sporadically [one made-for-TV movie] and the treaty with Germany has not worked at all" [two marginal efforts].

A more selective analysis reveals however, that with regard to the 13 most recent co-productions, all of which were made while the Capital Cost Allowance was in effect, our financial participation was 43 percent while creative contributions averaged out to only 32 percent.

Although each of the treaties reflects certain idiosyncrasies, the system as a whole magnifies the absence of Canadian writers on most projects. In the 13 films mentioned previously, there was not one wholly Canadian script. Canadian directors as well have been scarce commodities on French and Italian sets, while our directors of photography have had limited involvement within the British treaty so far.

In the body of the CCFM report, the Council highlighted some of its additional concerns including: the CFDC's failure to convene the industry's Advisory Council on co-productions; the intrusion of American subsidiaries in the treaties; the impact of television on productions; immigration regulations for foreigners and the lack of affirmative legislation for the domestic film industry.

The CFDC report did not address itself to any of these issues; however, Pete Legault stated that the industry had been consulted before approving each project and the corporation was examining the subsidiaries issue.

Whether or not the truth is to be found by quantifying the benefits of participation or tabulating the lack of it, the conclusion is the same: Canada has been stalled in a minority position in co-productions for the last two years. How the balance will be redressed is a matter of opinion—and there are plenty of those; but, by cancelling treaties we only ensure that their inequities become permanent, whereas punctual certification of film projects with major creative participation for Canadians would at least provide some immediate incentive for change.

Two heads are sometimes better than one—ideally, when you don't have to look up to see eye to eye. ●



● Mickey Rooney and Guy Hoffman chew the fat in the Canada/France co-production *Odessey of the Pacific*: director Fernando Arrabal.



● Prisoners Louise Marleau and Alberta Watson in the Canada/France co-production *Black Mirror*: director Pierre-Alain Jolivet.



● An international coffee break for actors Gilles Renaud and Jean Yanne, discussing the Canada/France co-production *Une journée en taxi*: director Robert Ménard.

Are two heads better than one? The Canadian Film Development Corporation thinks so. Last December, the CFDC issued a 22-page Co-production Study which re-affirmed the corporation's belief in the value of Canadians crafting films along with select foreign partners. Nine months earlier however, the Council of Canadian Filmmakers (CCFM) panned this eclectic approach and recommended that our lengthy affairs with Germany, Israel and Italy be ended—we have been used, or not used, badly.

The CFDC's labour has resulted in its coming to terms with the existence of "imbalances on the creative side in recent co-productions," from which they draw the conclusion that, "These are not factors which suggest that the treaties should be scrapped, rather the Canadian competent authorities should be more vigilant to ensure that overall balance is maintained during the life of each treaty."

In short, the co-production issue appears differently to each person.

When the CCFM delivered its report a year ago, they injected it with life by slapping the CFDC. The corporation's listless administration, it was claimed, had permitted too many minority Canadian projects to become certified as official co-productions. The filmmakers' 32-page overview of Canada's treaties with Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Israel, indicated that minimal Canadian creative participation was the norm in most instances, and generally that: "... the Canadian role is largely passive. Canadian talent, both in front of and behind the camera, is grudgingly accepted as the cost of gaining access to the Canadian investor."

The CFDC's subsequent analysis surveyed the same statistical terrain, but discovered that: "... there is no doubt that the Canadian film industry has benefited from the co-production treaties with France and the U.K. The experience Canadian producers have acquired from working on co-productions has been invaluable."

While industry spokesmen look towards the CFDC to alter, or annul, the treaties, the CFDC is looking at Canadian producers to balance past inequities through future productions. Pete Legault, Chief of Administration at the CFDC, and the one who monitors the treaties, commented, "We are looking at new policies which we will be issuing to the producers. The next applications that we get for co-productions, we will be looking at them with a view towards re-establishing the balance and making corrections in specific areas."

In general, co-production treaties are all the same. They are designed to ensure that each country's creative, technical and financial contributions remain balanced over the life of a treaty. As the CFDC notes in its study: "How this balance is achieved can be contentious, but in principle the contributions from the two countries should be within

Brendan Hawley is a freelance writer living in Ottawa.

# Canadian co-productions from 1964 to 1979

TITLE / (*CFDC participation) / year of production Canadian producer	Canadian percentage	Co-producer's percentage	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN/LEADING CREATIVE PERSONNEL							BUDGET
			Direct.	Script	Dir. of photog.	Art dir.	Editing	Music	Cast Cdn/ other	
LE COUP DE GRACE, 1964 Roger Blais, Montréal	—	—	Fr	Fr	Fr	—	Fr	Fr	3/2	\$125,000
LA MAISON DES AMANTS (*) 1970 Jean Duval, Trans Cinéma, Montréal	70 p.c.	30 p.c. (Fr)	Fr	Cdn	Cdn	Fr	Fr?	Cdn	2/1	224,000
SEPT FOIS PAR JOUR (*) 1970 Denis Héroux/John Kemeny, Montréal	70 p.c.	30 p.c. (Isr)	Cdn	Cdn	Cdn	Isr	Cdn	Cdn	1/2	355,000
LE GRAND SABORDAGE (*) 1970 Richard Moranville, Montréal	33 1/3 p.c.	66 2/3 p.c. (Fr)	Fr	Fr	Fr	Fr	Fr	Cdn	1/2	300,000
KAMOURASKA (*) 1971 Pierre Lamy, Prod. Carle/Lamy, Montréal	80 p.c.	20 p.c. (Fr)	Cdn	2 Cdn	Cdn	Cdn	Fr	Fr	2/3	850,000
J'AI MON VOYAGE (*) 1972 Claude Héroux, Cinévidéo, Montréal	80 p.c.	20 p.c. (Fr)	Cdn	Cdn	Cdn	Cdn	Cdn	Fr	6/3	403,000
AH, SI MON MOINE VOULAIT !, 1973 Nicole Boisvert, Citel, Montréal	50 p.c.	50 p.c. (Fr)	Fr	Cdn	Fr	Cdn	Fr	Fr/Cdn	1/1	—
LES CORPS CELESTES (*) 1973 Pierre Lamy, Prod. Carle/Lamy, Montréal	79 p.c.	21 p.c. (Fr)	Cdn	Cdn	Cdn	Cdn	Cdn	Fr	8/2	483,000
SWEET MOVIE (*) 1973 Richard Hellman, Mojack Films, Montréal	30 p.c.	70 p.c. (Fr)	Fr	Fr	Fr	Cdn	Fr	Fr	5/7	730,000
PAR LE SANG DES AUTRES (*) 1973 Claude Héroux, Cinévidéo, Montréal	20 p.c.	80 p.c. (Fr)	Fr	Fr	Cdn	Fr	Fr	Fr	3/5	750,000
JACQUES BREL IS ALIVE AND WELL AND LIVING IN PARIS, 1974, Cinévidéo, Montréal	80 p.c.	20 p.c. (Fr)	Cdn	Fr	Cdn	Fr	Cdn	Fr	0/3	809,000
BORN FOR HELL (*) 1974 Claude Héroux, Cinévidéo, Montréal	20 p.c.	20 p.c. (Fr) 20 p.c. (It) 40 p.c. (Ger)	Cdn	Ger/ Cdn	Ger	Ger	Cdn	Ger	2Cdn 3 It 1 Ger 1 Fr	900,000
Y A PAS DU MAL A SE FAIRE DU BIEN (*) 1974, Denis Héroux, Cinévidéo, Montréal	40 p.c.	60 p.c. (Fr)	Fr	1 Cdn 1 Fr	Fr	Cdn	Cdn	Fr	5/5	430,000
THE LITTLE GIRL WHO LIVED DOWN THE LANE 1976, H. Greenberg/D. Héroux, Intercontinental Leisure Industries	60 p.c.	40 p.c. (Fr)	Fr.	Fr	Cdn	Cdn	Cdn	Fr	1 Cdn 1 Fr 1 US	1,150,000
NIGHT OF THE HIGH TIDE, 1976 Jean-Pierre Martel, Canafox, Montréal	30 p.c.	70 p.c. (It)	It	It/Cdn	It	It	It	Cdn	2/4	1,350,000
CATHY'S CURSE, 1976 Nicole Boisvert, Prod. Agora, Montréal	35 p.c.	65 p.c. (Fr)	Fr	Fr	Fr	Fr	Fr	Fr	4/4	600,000
WELCOME TO BLOOD CITY, 1976 Len Heberman	70 p.c.	30 p.c. (UK)	UK	2 UK	Cdn	Cdn	UK	UK	2/6	1,200,000
RAGTIME SUMMER (*) 1976 Deanne Judson, Judson Pict., Toronto	70 p.c.	30 p.c. (UK)	UK	Cdn/ UK	UK	Cdn/ UK	Cdn	Cdn*	4/6	900,000
FULL CIRCLE (*) 1976 Julian Melzack, Classic Films, Montréal	40 p.c.	60 p.c. (UK)	UK	UK	UK	UK	Cdn	UK	2/5	1,120,000
A SPECIAL DAY, 1977 Richard Hellman, Canafox, Montréal	30 p.c.	70 p.c. (It)	It	1 Cdn 1 It	It	It	It	It	2/2	1,250,000
LA MENACE, 1977 Richard Hellman, Canafox, Montréal	25 p.c.	75 p.c. (Fr)	Fr	1 Cdn 1 Fr	Fr	Cdn	Fr	US/Fr	2/4	2,600,000
BLACKOUT, 1977 Prod. Agora/Dal prod., Montréal	50 p.c.	50 p.c. (Fr)	Fr	Cdn	Fr	Cdn	Cdn	Fr/Cdn	1/4	1,000,000
BLOOD RELATIVES, 1977 D. Héroux/J. Melzack, Cinévidéo/Classic Films, Mtl	50 p.c.	50 p.c. (Fr)	Fr	1Fr/ 1 US	Fr	Cdn	Cdn	Fr	5/4	\$1,354,000
VIOLETTE NOZIERE, 1977 Denis Héroux, Cinévidéo, Montréal	20 p.c.	80 p.c. (Fr)	Fr	Fr	Fr/Cdn	Fr	Cdn	Fr	2/5	1,360,000
LE VIEUX PAYS OU RIMBAUD EST MORT (*) 1977, Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, Cinak, Montréal	55 p.c.	45 p.c. (Fr)	Cdn	1 Cdn/ 1 Fr	Cdn	Fr	Cdn	Fr	1/3	350,000
TOMORROW NEVER COMES, 1977 Julian Melzack, Classic Films, Montréal	50 p.c.	50 p.c. (UK)	UK	2 UK/ Cdn	Cdn	Cdn	UK	UK	3/6	2,800,000
COUP D'ETAT (*) 1977 C. Dalton/R. Cooper, Magnum Int., Toronto	70 p.c.	30 p.c. (UK)	Cdn	Cdn	UK	Cdn	UK	UK	2/5	2,000,000
LEOPARD IN THE SNOW, 1977 Christopher Harrop, Harlequin Films, Toronto	40 p.c.	60 p.c. (UK)	UK	UK	UK	UK	UK	UK	2/4	950,000
THE UNCANNY (*) 1977 Claude Héroux, Cinévidéo, Montréal	70 p.c.	30 p.c. (UK)	Cdn	UK	UK	Cdn	Cdn	UK	3/8	700,000

# Canadian co-productions...

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			Direct.	Script	Dir. of photog.	Art dir.	Editing	Music	Cast Cdn/ other	
FIND THE LADY (*) 1977 David Perlmutter, Gaunt Films, Toronto	70 p.c.	30 p.c. (UK)	Cdn	2 Cdn	UK	Cdn	UK	UK	3/7	820,000
THE DISAPPEARANCE (*) 1977 G. Drabinsky/G. Arbeid, Tiberius Films, Toronto	35 p.c.	65 p.c. (UK)	UK	UK	UK	Cdn	UK	Cdn	3/6	1,400,000
JIGSAW, 1978 Denis Héroux, Cinévidéo, Montréal	33 p.c.	67 p.c. (Fr)	Fr	2 Fr/ Cdn	Fr	Cdn	Fr	Fr	3/5	3,100,000
IT RAINED ALL NIGHT THE DAY I LEFT, 1978 Claude Léger, Caneuram, Montréal	60 p.c.	20 p.c. (Fr) 20 p.c. (Isr)	Fr	Fr/Cdn	Cdn	Cdn	Cdn	Cdn	2/5	3,030,000
CARO PAPA, 1978 Richard Hellman, Films Prospec, Montréal	20 p.c.	30 p.c. (Fr) 50 p.c. (It)	It	It	It	It	It	It	1/5	1,680,000
L'ANGE GARDIEN, 1978 Richard Hellman, Films Prospec, Montréal	30 p.c.	70 p.c. (Fr)	Fr	Fr	Fr	Fr	Fr	Cdn/Fr	2/7	990,000
A MAN CALLED INTREPID (*) 1978 Harold Greenberg, AMCI, Montréal	33 p.c.	67 p.c. (UK)	Cdn	UK	UK	Cdn/UK	Cdn	Cdn	3/8	3,400,000
MURDER BY DECREE (*) 1978 B. Clark/L. Herberman, Saucy Jack Inc., Toronto	35 p.c.	65 p.c. (UK)	Cdn	UK	Cdn	UK	Cdn	Cdn	4/6	4,300,000
A NOUS DEUX (*) 1979 D. Héroux/J. Beaubien, Cinévidéo, Montréal	25 p.c.	75 p.c. (Fr)	Fr	Fr	Fr	Cdn	Fr	Fr	1/5	4,300,000
BYE, SEE YOU MONDAY, 1979 N. Boisvert/J. Vidette, Montréal	50 p.c.	50 p.c. (Fr)	Fr	2 Fr/ Cdn	Cdn	Cdn	Fr	Cdn/ 2 Fr	2/3	1,700,000
ATLANTIC CITY, U.S.A. (*) 1979 Denis Héroux, Ciné Neighbor, Montréal	80 p.c.	20 p.c. (Fr)	Fr	Fr/US	Cdn	Cdn	Fr	-	3/3	7,100,000
FANTASTICA (*) 1979 Guy Fournier, Prod. du Verseau, Montréal	50 p.c.	50 p.c. (Fr)	Cdn	Cdn/ US	Cdn	Cdn	Fr	Cdn	5/2	2,800,000
GIRLS, 1979 Claude Léger, Caneuram, Montréal	25 p.c.	50 p.c. (Fr) 25 p.c. (Ger)	Fr	Fr	Fr	Fr	Cdn	UK	2/6	2,000,000
BEAR ISLAND (*) 1979 Peter Snell, Selkirk Films, Toronto	60 p.c.	40 p.c. (UK)	UK	UK	UK	UK	UK	Cdn	2/6	13,000,000
DEATHSHIP, 1979 Harold Greenberg, Bloodstar Films (ABP), Mtl	68 p.c.	32 p.c. (UK)	Cdn	UK	Cdn	UK/ Cdn	UK	UK	4/8	4,500,000



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