

Secretary of State Gerard Pelletier singled out the Film Co-Op brief on National Film Policy in his July 4th speech. Many of the points put forward by Pelletier are slight modifications of the brief. He made it clear, however, that the very touchy subject of distribution wasn't dealt with yet; it remains to be formulated into state policy sometime in the future. It would seem that the government is very cautious, and is approaching the question of a distribution quota system in dread of the powers that be. (i.e. U.S. controlled motion picture distributors.) It's also not clear, whether Pelletier's proposals are firm Canadian government policy, or the somewhat dubious promises of a politician, who might be leaving his post come the next election.

The Toronto Filmmakers Co-Op is undergoing its most active period, since it was formed over a year ago. The 16mm all-Canadian theatre that the Co-Op has been pushing for over the last ten months, is at last a reality, if only for the summer months. Kirwan Cox's personal initiative has to get a lot of the credit, but the production co-op helped in numerous ways by generating enthusiasm, keeping the idea alive, and supplying the manpower to do the physical labor. The Poor Alex Theatre on Brunswick Avenue south

# the Toronto film maker's co-op

of Bloor Street has been transformed into a centre for Canadian films through September (see schedule elsewhere in this issue.) Every week a different filmmaker comes in person to introduce his work, which is then shown every night (except Monday) for the rest of the week. In addition, there are attention grabbing midnight shows, and if a film is particularly popular, it receives extra showings at six and at midnight. Regular showings are at eight and ten. The atmosphere in the theatre lobby before and after the showings is approaching the kind of "cinophile fraternite" that exists in the cinemathèques of Montreal and Europe. (For more information, please call 921-2259, ask for Tom or Jerry.)

The Theatre was launched with an all-out bash thrown by Kirwan and Patricia Murphy, and the rest of the good-guys. Many important people from public life came, along with a naked Maple Leaf. Morley Markson was there, who's film BREATHING TOGETHER: THE REVOLUTION OF THE ELECTRIC FAMILY received its premier commercial run as the first attraction. Chalmers Adams floated around, having recently disconnected himself from the CFDC. Doug McGrath and Paul Bradley were there, the latter running up and down the aisle acting

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as a 100 proof usher, and being the life of the party in general.

Don Shebib, the guy who made them famous, ran around to absorb it all from different vantage points. Nicole Morin appeared as if in a vision dancin' and jigglin' up on stage (where the dance floor was) and enhancing greatly the rest of the images seen through the alcoholic (and less harmful) haze. Experimental films were shown in between bursts of toe-tappin' energy, and those who missed Paul Bradley's running commentary on David Rimmer's *Pizza Palace* film at two-thirty in the morning, will never truly appreciate the comic dimensions of that work. All in all, a great time was had by all, and we hope Kirwan lives up to his promise (uttered between official pronouncements of his resignation from the Distribution Co-Op's Directorship) to throw another one before the summer ends.

In a more serious vein, the main line of the Production Co-Op is making films, and that's exactly what we're doing this summer: a twenty-minute, black and white short on old people. It's part of an Opportunities for Youth project, with Eugene Buia directing, Elsa de Jonge assisting, and John Marshall handling the editing. (Rumors are that one of the editors of Cinema Canada is doing the cinematography. These rumors, however, have yet to be cleared with IATSE.)

Some of the shooting has been done, with more to come. The rushes look good, especially the footage shot during Senior Citizen's week at the Brunswick tavern. Some of the other locations are the Mariposa Folk festival, Ontario Place, Rochdale College, the Salvation Army, a senior citizen's drop-in centre, a Church during a

bingo game, and assorted park benches. Wherever old folks hang out these days. We are trying to track down the Hell's Grannies motorcycle club, but they move too fast. Janet Good is providing the equipment at very reasonable rates, and Quinn Labs extended the Co-Op a substantial discount. We had some trouble with second-hand film stock, but hopefully that has been solved for good. (Did you know that four-year old Double-X negative loses some of its speed, as much as 2/3rds of a stop?)

In all fairness to the other people working under the OFY grant, the *filmmaking workshops* and the *community consultation* programs, should also be mentioned, with John Marshall doubling as workshop co-ordinator, and Roy Blake handling the liaison between the co-op and community groups, who wish to use film to express their viewpoints. They are assisted by Tom Urquhart, and David Peebles is the overall coordinator of the OFY project, doing the books, sharpening the pencils, helping the Meskanow people to project films, painting the office, answering the phones, hassling with faulty equipment, as well as giving some workshops himself. David is known to take a break, once a week. But at least a rolling Peeble gathers no moss.

The Co-Op is by no means financially secure. After the OFY grant runs out, all that's left is a very basic, rock-bottom subsistence grant from the Ontario Arts Council. Hopefully some other government bodies will come across with a grant. (Especially after the overwhelming success of the first co-operatively produced film, *GERITOL JUNGLE*, currently in production.) But we are always grateful for any and all contributions, be it financial or filmmaking equipment

oriented. If you have a rusty old hot splicer in your basement that you cut your 1933 epic on, why not donate it to the Co-Op? Or, if you're a government agency, and have tons and tons of unused production equipment lying around in a storeroom year round (last dusted off to shoot *Holiday* in Etobicoke, some time back) why not consider asking and badgering your supervisor (everybody in government has a supervisor) until he gives in and says, OK, shi'it to 341 Bloor Street West, Room 201 at my expense. (That will be the day! But seriously, what about those old Bell and Howell projectors sitting in the NFB storerooms down in New York, and I'm sure in many other places as well. Three non-operational projectors could be re-assembled to make *one* that's in perfect running condition.

The June issue of *Filmmakers Newsletter*, Vol. 5, No. 8, carries a large number of articles of interest, done in greater depth than many magazines bother with.

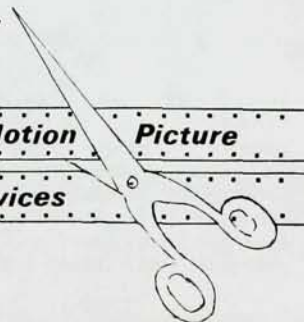
A column called *Superserious 8* deals with up to the minute reports on Super 8 equipment advances and techniques. The equipment report on the 111 SMPTE Convention takes a good look at many of the items shown, including the Arri 35BL, and the Mitchell Mark III, both 35mm self-blipped production cameras; and some of the new smaller 16mm sound cameras like the Eclair ACL and the Beaulieu News 16. There is also a full technical report on the ACL that makes fascinating reading. There are good words on new editing machines, both expensive and less expensive types, wireless microphones, and Super 8 equipment.

Subscriptions are \$7.00 yearly for Canada, available from *Filmmakers Newsletter*, 41 Union Square West, New York, N.Y. 10003.

*Ursula Sebb*

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