

THE ROWDYMAN

INTERVIEW WITH PETER CARTER



Photo: John Eckert

by George Csaba Koller

THE ROWDYMAN, a CANART FILMS PRODUCTION, directed by Peter Carter/produced by Lawrence Z. Dane/Executive Producer F.R. Crawley/original screenplay by Gordon Pinsent/director of photography, Edmund Long. Produced with the assistance of the Canadian Film Development Corporation. Starring Gordon Pinsent, Linda Goranson, Frank Converse, and Will Geer. World Premiere: St. John's, Newfoundland on May 18, 1972. Opens in Toronto at the Uptown Theatre on May 26th.

Peter Carter, who directed *THE ROWDYMAN*, is a second generation filmmaker. His late father, Donald Carter, was a renowned documentarian and managing director of Gaumont British Instructional Films Ltd.

CARTER: "An actress or an actor react differently to a camera, than a normal person. A good actress, like Genevieve Bujold, she makes love to the bloody camera, I mean, she really loves that thing. It is part of her thing, she damn near reaches a climax with a camera."

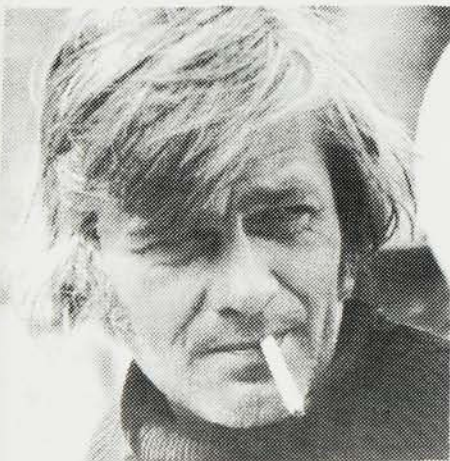


Photo: Mike Jones

CINEMA CANADA: IS THAT GOOD?

CARTER: "That's great!"

CC: TO BE THAT CONSCIOUS OF THE CAMERA FOR AN ACTOR?

"Oh yeah! Because they don't play to it, they play for it and with it. It's like if you've got a great focus puller and a great actor, and you see it happening and it's beautiful. The actor will change his move slightly and the great focus puller will adjust that amount and that's the take you print because you know something happened, that the two were together. All that love bit again!"

Charles Champlin, film critic for the Los Angeles Times, writes:

"The Rowdyman was written by Gordon Pinsent, who played the President of the United States in Universal's COLOSSUS: THE FORBIN PROJECT and who stars in this film as a charming love-'em-and-leave-'em rascal. He's a laborer in a paper mill on the Newfoundland coast and he is the ginger man without the abrasive anti-social rage. He is Alfie with no record of betrayals because he makes no commitments in the first place. He knows that keeping footloose and irresponsible requires a severe act of will."

CARTER: "I started as an apprentice in the J. Arthur Rank training program, which was a great, great thing, but it cost so much money, that they had to stop it. I worked as an assistant director and an assistant editor in England, before I came to Canada in 1955. Here I worked at Crawley Films, which was another great place to learn in those days, because you had to do everything from edge numbering right the way through. I stayed in Ottawa four years as production assistant, assistant editor, sound editor, first assistant director and production manager. Went back to England again in '59 to freelance, then went to Africa for



Photo: John Eckert

nearly eighteen months doing documentaries and second unit on, what was that awful John Wayne picture? I can't remember the name of it, it was a great job, it paid well. *Hatari*, it was *HATARI!*

I was out doing documentaries and they had their own second unit which was composed of about eight vehicles and twenty-eight people, and of course when they went out into the bush to photograph game, well, the game just went. So I had only myself and a cameraman, shooting documentaries, and finally they hired us, because we could get the footage they couldn't get. It was super.

Then I came back here in 1963 to do "Forest Ranger" as A.D. for two years, and a year on "Seaway." Then, when "Wojeck's" second year started, Ron Weyman gave me a break, and let me direct one, and that is how I got into direction.

I am a great believer in being slow. When I was eighteen I decided I wouldn't direct my first feature until I was thirty-nine, so I am a bit ahead of schedule at the moment. I wanted to learn slowly; I believe in learning from experience as opposed to learning from a book. So I was quite happy as A.D. when Ronnie said just try directing this one and they liked it. I did another one, and started directing for the CBC pretty regularly, although as a freelancer, not on staff. At the same time I was working



with Paul Almond as associate producer on all his features. This was up until last year when I was associate producer on A FAN'S NOTES for Eric Till.

Will Cole the rowdyman of the title, writes Champlin, is "familiar enough, a universal figure on and off the screen. The particular fascination (which evidently scares distributors because it may seem parochial) is that this rogue is part of an unfamiliar and beautifully observed setting. The environment helped make him and the movie reveals them both.

Pinsent's own performance is excellent and charismatic, and Will Geer gives a supporting performance as the hero's dying mirror-image that is hard to forget. In fact, the whole ensemble, especially Frank Converse and Linda Goranson, is fresh, attractive, and notably gifted. The director, Peter Carter, is a man to remember.

Not a blockbuster, not a programmer to be dumped in multiple release, but vivid, off-trail, frequently very funny indeed, well-made and better-than-well acted, sexy, adult, and intelligent (yet all handled with a refreshing restraint and I should think sure to be rated no worse than PG)."

CC: WE NOTICED YOU STAYED AWAY FROM EXPLICIT SEX SCENES:

CARTER: "Yeah, I did on purpose. Because I'm bored with it, really, I mean I don't like watching other people screw. I don't know why I don't. It may be prudish—I don't need it, it doesn't do

anything for me. I feel I am a peeping Tom when I watch a film with explicit sex scenes."

Will is an easy going yet rugged Newfie manchild, who refuses to grow up. His life is one continuous prank, whether chasing after willing women through the woods at a town picnic, going along on his best friend's honeymoon, or sleeping off another drunken binge at the village police station. He refuses to conform, yet he fits into the life of Corner Brook, Newfoundland marvelously well.

When he walks through the village streets at a prancing pace, he has the proud stance of a young cock, ready for a fight or a tumble in the haystack. He says "Good day" to everyone, even though most of the finer folk ignore his greeting, being well aware of his reputation. Some even chide their eager daughters who coyly answer Will's greeting.

"Trying to hustle money for features is, as you know, a real tough road to go. Getting ROWDYMAN on was a miracle, because you always get questions like:

'Have you done one before?

'No? Well, how do we know you won't waste all the money?

But finally we got it on, and it was quite an amazing round up, because when I was doing the RCMP for Crawley's Larry Dane got his first job in the business as a stand-in on that series, then went on to become an actor and all that jazz and went down to Hollywood. As did Gordie Pinsent, I knew them both from way back then. Gordie wrote the

script, and Larry was a really good hustler, really great. Gordie gave Larry the script, and he was the one who really got the money. I mean he used to spend nights in hotel corridors waiting outside people's doors, so he could get them in the morning before they went to work."

The law is after Will, too, but he manages to outrun the local constable most of the time, or at least talk himself out of custody. The ways he twists the law around his little finger are a delight to watch. When a new peace officer takes over the precinct, he tries to force Will to bend to his will. The subtle power relationship between the two men played for warm laughs will provoke flashes of recognition. The policeman ends up lighting Will's cigarettes for him all the while striking fake postures of authority.

"Larry's terrific. He won't take no for an answer. I mean, you can say no to Larry, but you might as well forget it, because he will just go ahead and get it done somehow. We first raised the money from a group of people and we went off to Newfoundland scouting for locations, and then they phoned us and said sorry, the money is off because one of our partners has chickened out. So we were stuck in Newfoundland with no bread. We had to come back. Finally Budge Crawley sort of looked at it and said, well, I think I can put it together for you. So it all sort of went back to the RCMP days again, I mean, all the people who had worked on it. Like Tommy Glynn, who was production manager on RCMP became the production manager on ROWDYMAN."



Photo: Mike Jones

Time is passing him by, all his old buddies are married and settled down, even his best friend is preparing to tie the knot. A girl from a finer family is after him too, in a gentle and beautiful way, but he is scared of becoming attached, and keeps on running. His encounters with Ruth (played with a memorable glow by Linda Goranson) are charmingly captured, replete with subtle touches, and reveal Will's inability to have a mature relationship with a woman. Lots of sex, sure, but when it comes to sleeping with someone he knows and likes, he becomes unsure of himself and would rather rush off to chase some stranger.

WHAT ABOUT BERGMAN'S FILMS?

"I hate them. I think most people really hate them. I think they just go because they are told that's good for them. If you asked anybody, honestly do you really like them, do you understand them; most people would say no. Most people don't.

I don't know why he makes films, I don't know the man. But take Paul Almond. He's Canadian and he's like Bergman in his head. He makes films because he wants to tell people something which is very important to him. Like *Act of the Heart*. Most people who saw *ACT OF THE HEART* don't know what the Augustinian theory is, and if you don't know what the Augustinian theory is you can't really understand that film. Now that's fine for people who want to do those kinds of films, but I don't. I want to do the kind of films Joe Blow can go and see, and say that was exciting, it was fun. Now anything of me that I want to say that I want to hide in that, fine, but basically it's got to be fun or exciting or funny or something. It has got to be dramatic, but basically entertaining."



Photo: John Eckert

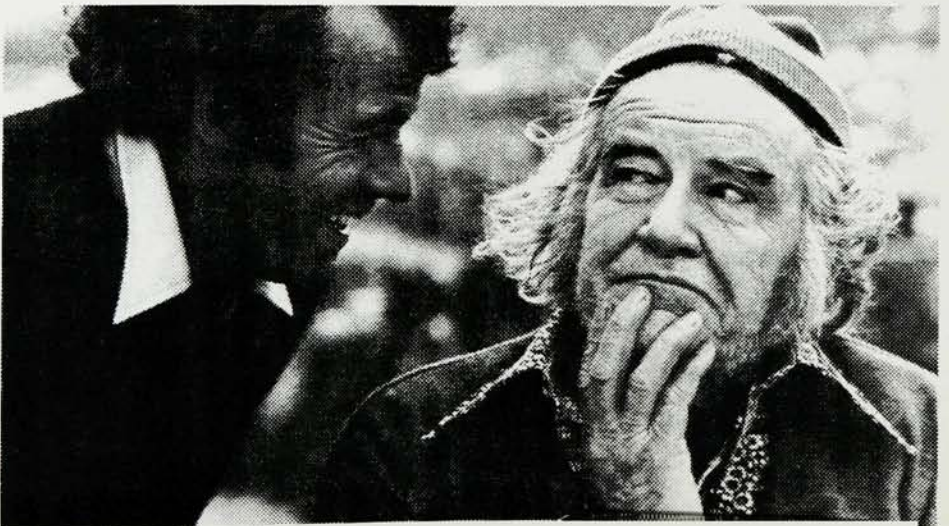
Will's power comes from his being constantly on the move, always in the thick of things, but never being bogged down, never allowing anything or anyone to stop the flow of his life force. He'll visit the local whorehouse to romp around with three at a time, then be off to St. John's to blow off some more steam. En route, he lets his vigor and charm seduce another conquest, who can't get over how "lovely" he is and begs him for some more. But in the Newfie capital he spends his time sweetening the last days of an old sea captain (played by Will Geer) whom he tries desperately to keep alive, since in the old man he sees all the boyhood stories of romance and adventure going to the grave. Will can't bear to look death in the face, and this fear becomes his foil.



Photo: John Eckert

"*THE ROWDYMAN* is about a guy, who is a thirty-five year old Peter Pan, who thinks he is still seventeen or eighteen, he refuses to become "responsible." That's what it is about. It happens to be set in Newfoundland, because that is where Gordie was born. In some ways it is the story of what would have happened to Gordie if he hadn't left Newfoundland. It's basically, I hope entertainment. I don't believe in films—how should I put it—that are just all message and so-called art films. I don't think they are good entertainment. I think your prime responsibility is to make a film which people go to and enjoy and are entertained. If you can tell or teach them anything or see a message in it, well, that's good, but it's not the prime point of it. It's that they can go and pay their two-fifty and forget about their own troubles."

Photo: John Eckert



DO YOU THINK THAT A LOT OF FILMS NOW ARE GETTING AWAY FROM THAT?

"No. They are going back to it now. Like *GODFATHER* is a straight story film. It's up to nineteen million gross and that is what the people want. That film has gone up to \$3.50, and if you are going to pay three-fifty for a film, you want to go there and be entertained. That is what you are paying the money for, you are not going to get a lecture. If you want to go and have a lecture, go to a university."

YOU SEEM TO BE PRE-OCCUPIED WITH DEATH THOUGH IN THE *ROWDYMAN*, THE WHOLE THEME SEEMS TO BE THAT. ISN'T THAT A MESSAGE?

"Oh yeah, I mean you do that, well you sneak it in, you don't knock them over the head with it. Who was it that said, Cowan wasn't it, the chief of Columbia, "You wanna send a message, send it by Western Union!"

Andrew, his best friend (portrayed by U.S. television star, Frank Converse) is tired of Will's fast living and tells him so. Andrew himself is getting married and Will dreads the thought of being invited over for dinner and domesticity. The two men work together in a paper mill (when Will is not off on another unpaid holiday spree) and they are very close, a closeness threatened by the new bride. Will keeps phoning Andrew to come and have a beer with him, even on the night before the wedding. He even "attends" their honeymoon, which is a beautifully acted and filmed scene of nervous fumbling, the price tag still on the negligee, and drunk Will yelling outside "you ain't doin' it right!"

"Rowdyman is a man we all wish we had the guts to be in a lot of ways. But because of outside pressures like money, like sex, like responsibility, we can't be; we'd like to be like that, all of us."

IS HE TOTALLY FREE?

"He tries to be and in the end he says screw it, I'm that way, and goes back being totally free, with no sense of responsibility at all. And I think we'd all like to be that way if we could, or had the guts to be. A lot of it is guts. We don't say screw it, I don't care because we're afraid to, really, a lot of us."



IT'S A MATTER OF SURVIVAL, I GUESS.

"Yeah, and I think it is mainly because of our relationships with other people. We tend to be worried about what the other person will think of us. It is not what we think but what the other person thinks that makes us go and do certain things."

ALSO, LONELINESS FORCES US TO GET ON OTHER PEOPLE'S TRIPS.

The dramatic turning point of the film concerns a freak accident at the paper mill. Will is forced to look death in the face, and the fear paralyzes him.

"There is a period in the film when Will is really down, he goes totally into himself and really doesn't like what he sees there and he begins to hate himself. I think we all go through that period, and then you have a period where you say that's the way I am and I have to put up with it, because if I can't, sure as hell nobody else can. From that point you come out of it. If you don't, well there is no way, you might as well commit suicide, really, mightn't you? If you can't live with yourself then for sure as hell there is no point in living."

DID YOU ENCOUNTER ANY SPECIAL PROBLEMS WHILE SHOOTING THE *ROWDYMAN*?

The toughest problem in shooting the picture was the goddamned winds. Sort of about a thousand feet up in Newfoundland, the winds are always strong, so the clouds are moving like Jesus, I mean really it is incredible. You can do a set up, take the camera off the tripod and look up and it's different. For close-ups, say you were going to shoot a scene this way with that background there; by the time I got to your close-up I'd have to have you over here, because the clouds by now have moved. It was arghhhhhhhh... There is one place in the film where this shows really bad. That day was incredible. We had sunshine before lunch, it was sunny when we went out, by the time we set up it was cloudy, by the time we had done the first rehearsal, it was raining, by the time of the second rehearsal it was hailing, and then it went back to sun and we broke for lunch. You get to a point where you don't know what you are matching to, because your head is whirling: we printed take three,



Will Geer

At seventy, Will Geer is a wandering and controversial actor, and has been throughout his long career. His only luggage these days is a knitted shoulderbag containing a few clothes and a shaving kit. He carefully records personal accounts of his travels, together with the names and addresses of his co-stars and crew members of each film or TV show in which he appears. His motion picture credits include: *THE REIVERS* with Steve McQueen, *THE SAGA OF JEREMIAH JOHNSON*, *DEAR DEAD DELILAH*, *NAPOLEON*, *SAMANTHA*, *BRIGHT VICTORY*, *COMANCHE TERRITORY*, *BAREFOOT MAILMAN*, *IN COLD BLOOD*, and *BANDOLERO*. On stage he has appeared as Robert Frost in *AN EVENING'S FROST* and in such classic plays as *WAITING FOR LEFTY*, *TOBACCO ROAD* and *SING OUT THE NEWS*.

Geer is marking his fifty-fourth year in show business. His career spans boat and tent shows, silent movies and travelling stock companies. During the fifties he was blacklisted by the U.S. House Un-American Activities Committee. He was a close friend of Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger and their whole circle of creative misfits. Forced to find their own work, they sought out churches and lofts in New York's Lower East Side and inadvertently established what is now a thriving off-Broadway theatre complex. "Writers such as Erskine Caldwell and John Steinbeck gave us sketches against the advice of their agents," recalls Geer. "We put on shows in union halls, in churches, on street corners and in colleges and took up collections to keep ourselves in food."

Geer's tenacity and love for his work takes him on gruelling one night stands with Walt Whitman, Mark Twain or Robert Frost readings. He often does two-hundred U.S. universities and colleges in a single year. Will appears briefly as narrator on the recently released albums of the Woody Guthrie Memorial Concerts.

and it was like that, right. Ed (Edmund Long, Director of Photography) did a terrific job and it was really harried for him.

An outdoor scene was held up for eight hours due to heavy rain. While crew and actors huddled together waiting for it to stop, someone suggested it would be miraculous if they could find a drink. Without another word, a crew member took the wind sock off his microphone to reveal a bottle of Big Dipper Rum. Crew and star Gordon Pinsent were then able to stop shivering long enough to shoot the scene.

ANY BOOZE OR DRUG PROBLEMS ON THE SET?

Well there again I think you have to do it by example. Like when I'm working and unless it is really, really bloody cold, I never drink.

DO YOU EXPECT YOUR ACTORS TO DO THE SAME?

I expect them to do the same. You don't talk about it, but they do it. I mean I've never had problems of this sort. I had one drunk actor, but he will never work with me again. People who are on pot or acid never do it while they are working with me.

WITH ACTORS WOULDN'T IT BE RATHER HARD TO TELL, BEING THAT THEY'RE ALWAYS EXPECTED TO BE SUPERSENSITIVE AND HYPER?

Oh you can. Their co-ordination goes you know, you can tell right away because after three rehearsals you find he has not said the lines the same way twice.

Carter decided to take footage of Gordon Pinsent at an inaccessible cove. He persuaded a local fisherman to take Pinsent and the assistant director out in a dorey. Halfway across the bay, a plug popped out and the boat began to sink. They reached shore safely but decided to try again. This time, the oar lock broke and Carter, who valued both the star of the film and his assistant, decided to abandon the scene.

IS ROWDYMAN A CANADIAN FILM?

"I would rather it went out—I mean I know there is no hope—just as a film. I think that the Canadian Film tag is a kiss of death. And it really isn't a Canadian film, it's a Newfoundland film. And in Newfoundland they call Canada the "mainland up along side" and it's like a foreign country."

In their preliminary scouting trips for proper locations, Larry Dane and his colleagues had no trouble getting cooperation from Newfoundlanders. The CNR temporarily restored service on a passenger train for a travelling scene. During several re-takes of a seduction scene aboard the train, one local railwayman wryly quipped: "It never took that much time years ago!"

HOW DO NEWFOUNDLANDERS FEEL ABOUT BEING THE BRUNT OF ALL THE NEWFIE JOKES?

"Well, a funny thing about Newfie jokes, is that Newfoundlanders tell them and they are much better Newfie jokes, than the mainlanders' Newfie jokes. They're great and have a twist, which is usually against the teller, indirectly. But they get very uptight about a mainlander telling a mainlander Newfie joke, and I don't blame them. I mean, Newfoundland is the oldest part of Canada—although they joined officially only in 1948. The average wage there is something like three thousand dollars a year, and it's really tough. Newfoundland is a rock, you can't grow anything on it except trees. All the fish is exported and—except in St. John's—you can't get fresh fish even.



Linda Goranson

Linda Goranson won an Etrog for Best Actress at the Canadian Film Awards in 1970, for her performance in *SPIKE IN THE WALL*, the first episode of the television series *THE MANIPULATORS*. Her childhood ambition of becoming an actress was finally fulfilled, when after failing at CBC auditions several times, she was cast into the role of Rita Tushingham's sister in *THE TRAP*, a movie made in British Columbia. With the money she made from the film she enrolled at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art. She was then eighteen years of age. She worked in films and television in Britain, then returned to her native Vancouver, where she was offered the part that won her the Etrog. Since 1970, she has appeared in feature films such as *INSIDE OUT* and *A FAN'S NOTES*, and in *INTERLUDE* with Donald Sutherland and Oscar Werner. She has also worked extensively in television and on the stage, and today she can be seen playing the role of Victoria in CBC's *WHITEOAKS OF JALNA* series. Since co-starring in *THE ROWDYMAN* the twenty-four-year-old actress has been offered starring roles in upcoming Canadian movies.

Actor turned producer Dane had special praise for Newfoundland actors Ted Henley, Estelle Wall, Austin Davis and Tess Ewing, none of whom had acted in films before. Dane enthused that they gave fantastic performances and enhanced the film with ethnic texture. As he jokingly quipped to Ted Henley: "Hollywood will discover you, take you away

from Newfoundland and completely change your life."

"The guy who played Constable Williams, was actually the head of the tourist bureau, yeah, the Newfoundland government tourist bureau. He is a super actor, he really is."

HE PLAYS HIMSELF, HE DOESN'T REALLY ACT.

"No, he's an amateur. He's done amateur dramatics and that sort of thing. And Will's sister was a Newfie too, a real Newfie! She was from Grand Falls and was a school friend of Gordie's when he went to school."



Gordon Pinsent

Gordon Edward Pinsent was born and raised in a paper mill town in Newfoundland. He left in 1948 to spend his formative years on stage in Winnipeg, Toronto, and Stratford. His Canadian TV and film acting career reached a peak when for two seasons he starred in *QUENTIN DURGENS, M.P.*, one of the most successful series in CBC-TV history. On the strength of this success he travelled to Hollywood, where he starred or appeared in major motion pictures such as *COLOSSUS: THE FORBIN PROJECT*, and *THE THOMAS CROWN AFFAIR*, along with numerous U.S. network television programs. He started to write scripts after wading through "an awful lot of meaningless type roles." Since then he's written four feature length movie scripts, including *The Rowdyman* and *John and the Missus*, presently under option to Toronto producer Al Waxman. For the past two years Pinsent, his wife, Toronto actress Charmion King and their seven-year-old daughter, Leah, have been living in suburban Los Angeles.

Almost one thousand local residents were signed as extras in crowd and street scenes. The Newfoundland dialect, however, did present some problems for the visitors, both during the day's work and on the sound track. "Like myself," said Pinsent, "they talk too fast. I told the local actors they would have to slow down or else our movie about Newfoundlanders would have to use subtitles!"

"We had quite a lot of Newfoundlanders on the crew. Picked up there, mostly from Memorial University. We had our boom swinger, Deryck Harnett, who also wrote a song for the picture. All we took out there was a cameraman (Ed Long, CSC), a soundman (David Howells), a chief electrician (David Usher), a chief grip (Louis Graydon), a make-up man (Ken Freeman), the assistant cameraman (Peter Luxford), a stills man and general assistant (John Eckert), and a continuity girl. I think that's all. Just department heads, in other words. The rest we picked up there, because we didn't have enough money. I mean that film was made for under three hundred thousand dollars, which is—when you see it—quite incredible. Transport someone out there and you have to pay their fare, hotel and expenses, and the budget would have gone up like a skyrocket, if we'd taken more people."

WERE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE JOB THE LOCALS DID?

"Oh yeah. They were great, because most of them were university students who wanted to get into film, and they were much keener than a lot of, say professional electricians from Toronto, who don't give a damn about what is really going on, to them it's just a job, and they are getting the union rate, and that's it. Whereas with those kids, it was their film, it was the first feature film in Newfie, and it was about Newfie and they liked the script and they really broke their necks."

The Kinsmen Club organized the picnic scene in the film taken at Bowater Park. The supplied booths, decorations and a girls' school band. Weather dampened the prospect of shooting the crowd scene, but a radio SOS to nearby residents turned out enough people as further proof of the co-operation of the Newfoundlanders.

"We went to one of the service clubs and gave them a thousand dollars toward having a picnic. So they organized the picnic and we shot it. It was funny about the girls' high school band, you know. One of the gaffers is a little guy, and we are always teasing him about picking up young girls under the age limit, so at the picnic we spread the rumor that someone had invited all those girls up to his room after the shooting and so then we got the



Frank Converse

Frank Converse was born in St. Louis, Missouri and graduated from Carnegie Tech as a drama major in 1962. He joined the American Shakespeare Festival in Stratford, Connecticut, then went on to play at Festivals across the U.S. Along the way there were stock company roles in *BUS STOP*, *A HATFUL OF RAIN* and *A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS*. He also starred in the off-Broadway production *THE HOUSE OF BLUE LEAVES*. Television audiences know him mainly from his starring role (with Jack Warden and Robert Hooks) in *N.Y.P.D.*, and on his own in the short-run but well-made CBS series *CORONET BLUE* in the mid-sixties. Converse co-starred with *ROWDYMAN* producer Larry Dane in U.S. TV programs, and their acquaintance led to his role of Andrew, Will's best friend, in the film.

soundman with a tape of the band and he started playing it down the corridor outside the gaffer's room, and we walked up with the tape recorder turning up the volume gradually, so the guy really thought the band was coming . . ."

Two of the songs in the film were written by Newfoundlanders (Ben McPeck composed and conducted the original music score); "King of the Castle" by Elizabeth Duffy and Philomena Bennett, as well as "It's A Lovely, Tell Your Mother Kind of Day" by Deryck Harnett, who was also a member of the crew.

HOW MUCH OF THE SOUND TRACK WAS RE-DUBBED IN A STUDIO?

"There were only two scenes dubbed: the paper mill scene, obviously, and another one. In actual fact, inside a paper mill you can't hear, you can't even shout at each other, you just wouldn't hear it. We dubbed one other, I've forgotten which, but the rest was all actual, location sound.

Canadian actor Eric House was flown to Newfoundland to shoot a scene in which a house is burned to the ground. Unfortunately for House, as good as the scene was, it finally ended up on the cutting room floor. But audiences will get

a chance to see the scene, since it is included in **ACTION, CUT and PRINT**, an hour long documentary shot on the set capturing the filming of **THE ROWDYMAN**.

WHAT ARE THE LIVING CONDITIONS LIKE IN NEWFOUNDLAND?

"Company town, company houses. Well, shacks is what most people live in. There are no empty houses in Newfoundland. I mean, once a house is empty, it's burned down, and that's it, because there is no point in keeping it. They are poor, very poor people, but a beautiful people, they are so friendly. When you stop and ask someone the way, they say come in and have a cup of tea; and if you don't they are insulted.

When we were shooting there would be at least a hundred kids around us all the time, and there in Toronto that would be impossible, you couldn't get them to shut up. But we just said would you be quiet now, we are going to shoot, and they'd all go dead quiet.

In Newfoundland, life is much cheaper. I don't mean just because you get paid less. You go into that graveyard, and most of the graves contain kids. They died of TB and malnutrition. So when you are in Newfoundland, there is a much closer tie to death, than there is on the mainland. When you are in a small town, too, you are more conscious of people dying. If someone dies in Toronto you don't notice it, really but if you are in a small town, when someone dies you really notice it, because he's not there any more, and you say where's old Joe? That is one of the horrid things about big cities, I think, that you don't notice."

The Rowdyman was the first major Canadian movie to go before the cameras in Newfoundland since the original talkie THE VIKING was produced there in 1930.

"Ed Long operated the camera as well as being D.O.P., which I like. I don't like having a separate operator. Even if I had to pay a standby, I would like my cameraman to operate always, because I feel he should. That old Hollywood system of separate Director of Photography and operator is wrong. If you work in Toronto, you have to pay an operator whether you use one or not. But I'd rather do that, than have one.

You can live where you like now as a film-maker, which is great. Toronto is the best place to live in the world now, because you can get to Los Angeles in four hours, London in four hours, New York in one hour."

LAST YEAR THERE WERE FIFTY FEATURES IN PRODUCTION IN CANADA. LATELY, SEVERAL MAJOR PROJECTS WERE CANCELLED DUE TO LACK OF FINANCING. DO YOU THINK THE "GREAT CANADIAN FILM BOOM" HAS ENDED?

"No, I don't think it's going to stop. I think the whole world's in a tight money situation, both America and Europe, and the film business—being a luxury entertainment business—is the first to get hit. This always has been, and you know we are going to have to suffer a little bit. It's not because it is Canada. I mean people in the States and England are having just as many pictures cancelled out from under them. It's just the sign of the times. And I think it's rather interesting, because although from a production standpoint it's very bad right now, from a cinema attendance point of view it's better than it has been in years. I mean just go down and look at those queues outside the GODFATHER! It's terrific, it's affecting other films, the attendance has gone up. It's great that people are starting to go to the cinema again. That money won't get back to us of course for another two years, because it has got to go through the mill and come out again.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE CANADIAN FILM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION?

"I'm definitely in favor of the C.F.D.C. I think they have done a good job up 'til now. I don't think all their decisions are right, there is no way I could, but without them THE ROWDYMAN wouldn't have been made. However, their ceiling of two hundred thousand dollars per investment is a mistake. It's all very well to make small budget films, but if Canada is going to be pegged as a country that makes small films, that's a bad thing."

DO YOU THINK THE PRIVATE SECTOR HAS AN ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITY? BOTH STUDIO CENTRE AND BELLEVUE-PATHE SEEM TO BE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN FINANCING.

"I do. John Bassett is doing it too. How long it's all going to last is another point, because it's all based on a tax dodge,

right? Now it's great that we've got that money, but the problem with it is that because it is based on a tax dodge, the investors don't give a damn whether you make a good film or not; in fact a lot of them hope it flops because they make more money that way."

ARE YOU PLANNING A NEW FILM, AND WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

"Yes, I've got the first draft of a script which is based on four Jack London short stories, and a couple of my own, and it's sort of becoming in a funny way a fictionalized biography of Jack London himself. And that's why I'm uptight about the two-hundred thousand limit on CFDC money, because I couldn't make this film for less than seven hundred thousand. I know, because of the subject: I've got to shoot it in the Yukon, I've got to have old trains coming out my ears, plus factories in 1850 and things like that."

SOUNDS LIKE ANOTHER ATTEMPT TO CAPTURE A SPECIAL TIME AND PLACE IN THE CANADIAN KALEIDOSCOPE. LIKE MON ONCLE ANTOINE AND THE ROWDYMAN.

"I think more and more films are attempting to do that. Films have gone out of Hollywood now, people are making films on location about odd groups. I've got another script now, which I can't get the money for, it's too expensive. But anyway it's a beautiful script; it's all about an English community in the Eastern Townships of Québec. It's actually a little Irish community, where they speak English and can't speak French, but it's in Quebec. As a result, it's a very special place. I think that is what interests people now; the world got smaller, people are becoming interested in little ethnic groups."

SANDY MCDONALD

in FILM
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MUSIC

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