

plays the woman who -- for what must be fascinatingly twisted, personal reasons -- lives, not imitates, the life of a street-walker. Ms. Montgomery, Andrea Cousineau, Maria Clark and the others who enact hookers, strippers and butch pimps have their roles down cold. They have the expression and the stance that clearly reads "Available: Reasonable Rates." They have the explosive speech and the cracked voices, the jumpy, stabbing mannerisms of aggression masking other feelings. They are the unsentimentalized, unglamorized embodiment of the downtown Toronto streetwalker. Utterly believable. Try to remember the last true-to-life hooker you saw in a fictional film.

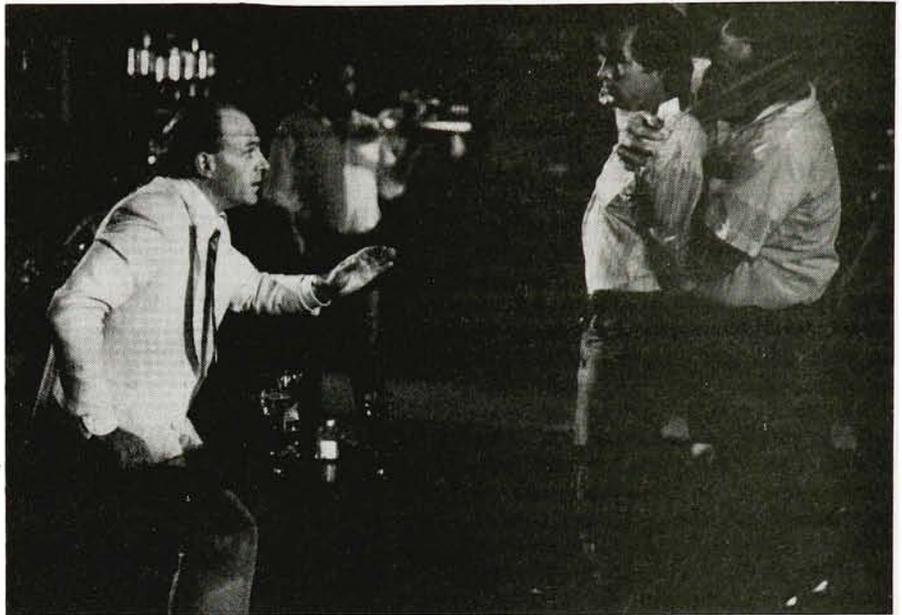
Despite their merits, Belinda J. Montgomery and company aren't enough to save *Stone Cold Dead*. They simply aren't on screen enough. And, by the time the film is in general release, they may be on screen even less. The version, I'm reviewing here, was the director's cut, shown at the Festival of Festivals. There's a chance that, by the time various producers, distributors and censors finish with it, *Stone Cold Dead* will have lost some of those very scenes that prevent it from being a stone, cold, dead waste of time.

Andrew Dowler

Julius Kohanyi's *Summer's Children*

d. Julius Kohanyi asst. d. Steve Wright, Bryan Gliserman sc. Jim Osborne cont. Lisa Wilder gaf. Jock Brandis cam. Richard Wincenty, Carl Harvey ed. Fred Brennan sup. ed. Michal C. Manne sd. Ingrid Cusiel elec. Scotty Allan props. Christophe Bonniere grip. David Hynes a.d. Terry Crack boom. Andrew Dowler m. Chris Stone Audio cast. Elinor Galbraith make-up Sandra Duncan l.p. Thomas Hauff, Paulty Jardine, Don Francks, Kate Lynch, Patricia Collins, Ken James, Wayne Best, Kay Hawtrey, Brian Miller, Marilyn Harris. p. Don Haig assoc. p. Nelson A Smith p. man. Sally Dundas p.c. Haha Productions, Haig-King Film Arts (1978) col. 35 mm. running time 90 min. dist. New Cinema Entreprises

It was evident after the screening of *Summer's Children* at this year's Festival of Festivals, that Julius Kohanyi's apprehensions about opening his first feature in Canada were, to an extent justified. No



Ready for the second round in *Summer's Children* (photo: Jack Rowand)

doubt members of the audience were aware that the central focus of the film was an incestuous relationship between a brother and sister. Perhaps they had also read *Variety's* description of it as an example of "new screen liberalism," always a tantalizing subject in Ontario with its censorial vigilance.

But, if they were expecting a story on the lines of *Mumur of the Heart* or *Luna*, one can understand their disappointment. For this film is solidly set in the Canadian, rather than the European, context of repression and guilt.

From the beginning, the film shows its links to this tradition in its dark visual style. A young man packs his bags in a dimly lit room. He walks out of a typical, southern Ontario farmhouse, gets into his blue Mustang and drives off into the night. Standing on the porch, bathed in light, a young woman in a white nightgown stares after him. The man drives erratically along the highway and crashes. He is seen slumped against the wheel, with blood seeping from a wound in his neck.

After these striking images, a rather mysterious sequence is shown under the titles. It is still night, and a Mustang is being towed along the streets of Toronto. After the scene has ended one discovers that it is, in fact, *another* car, and that the man from the previous scene is now working for the garage that owns the tow

truck. Here, the story proper begins, and the man is Steve Linton (Thomas Hauff) who now lives in the city, unaware that the woman in the first scene, his sister Jennie (Paulty Jardine), has followed him. When he finds out, he determines to seek her out. As Steve goes through the seedy downtown environments, his guide is a strange character he meets in a beer parlor. Albert, Don Francks, who calls himself The Professor, is a small-time bookie in a shabby white suit, with a fair share of street cynicism.

In his treatment of the search, Kohanyi has made a significant visual decision which clearly sets the tone of the film. This description of the city's underside diverges from the "film noir" style of those directors influenced by Samuel Fuller: a style which has become a sort of visual orthodoxy through its application by Martin Scorsese in *Mean Streets* and *Taxi Driver*, Paul Schrader in *Blue Collar* and *Hardcore*, James Torback in *Fingers*, and Philip Kaufman in *The Wanderers*. Canadian applications of what might be called 'Michael Chapman sleaze' can be seen in *Drying Up The Streets* and *Stone Cold Dead*. *Summer's Children*, however, with Josef Seckeresh's understated photography of the street scenes creates a quieter, more naturalistic atmosphere. The corruption and decay of the Toronto strip area are suggested without the exaggeration to which Robin Spry and George Mendeluk

resort.

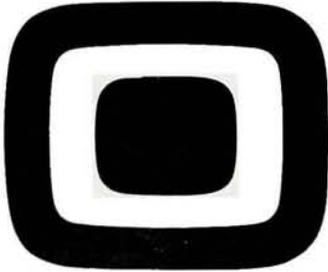
Kohanyi makes liberal use of flashbacks to fill in Steve and Jennie's background. Unfortunately there is so much background to be filled in that, the flashbacks become obtrusive to the main narrative. But, gradually, one does begin to appreciate why Jennie and Steve turn to each other, given the constricted atmosphere of the small Ontario town where they grew up, with so little hope or opportunity.

The flashbacks expose the central flaw in the picture; Jim Osborne's script, seems to be too ambitious for the form into which it has been set. Labouring attempts are made to hold the obvious sub-plots together. Thus, the car, which Steve's buddy in the garage is seen periodically working on, becomes a symbolic replica of Steve's old car, right down to the blue paint. In one sub-plot, Elaine — Jennie's designer friend — sleeps with Steve; then, in an admittedly touching but arbitrary scene, confesses that she has also slept with Jennie. Another twist of the plot finds Albert leading Steve into a hobo jungle, where Steve is consequently beaten up after discovering that Albert, too, has been involved with his sister. No attempt is made to integrate Steve's food freak girlfriend, Kathy (Kate Lynch), into the core story. To an extent, the inconsistencies of the plot are mitigated by

some uniformly excellent performances. Against all odds, Thomas Hauff and Paddy Jardine, as the siblings manage to make the characters of Steve and Jennie real, convincingly portraying, the anguish of their guilt-ridden relationship. Patricia Collins and Kate Lynch also do well with the feeble roles they are called upon to perform. But the real acting honors go to Don Francks, for his portrayal of Albert. After more than his share of bad luck and ridicule over the years, Francks, with a new sense of depth in his acting has demonstrated his versatility and skill in a recent burst of meaty roles, here, and in *Drying Up The Streets*, *Riel*, *Fast Company* and *Fish Hawk*.

In his documentaries, Julius Kohanyi showed himself to be a director of ability and intelligence. In *Summer's Children*, he has shown that he can draw sensitive and compelling performances from actors and deal with 'controversial' material without sensationalism. That he has already received a good reception from the people who count for future production opportunities bodes well for his career. But, it must be admitted, this film's scaffold-like plotting is a more distinct handicap to its commercial success than its introspective tone or its 'daring' theme.

J. Paul Costabile



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SHORT FILM REVIEWS

Glenn Gould's Toronto

d. John McGreevy ph. Roger Moride ed. Ted Roberts sd. Brian Avery m. Glenn Gould p. John McGreevy, Pat Ferns p.c. John McGreevy Productions, Nielson-Ferns International (1978) col. 16mm

Glenn Gould's Toronto is a documentary about, as Director John McGreevy puts it, Glenn Gould's personal view of Toronto. Well not quite. It's as if Gould also consulted the Ontario Ministry of Tourism to find out the "must see" places in town. The film should more accurately be called "Glenn Gould, a resident of Toronto, isn't and doesn't want to be." As he so aptly puts it at the end of the film:

"you can find tranquility in a city, but only if you opt not to be a part of it." But I'm getting ahead of myself.

Glenn Gould's Toronto is a one hour documentary, part of a Nielson-Ferns-John McGreevy series on the great cities of the world. Other cities in the series are *Peter Ustinov's Leningrad*, *R.D. Laing's Glasgow*, *George Plimpton's New York*, and *Germaine Greer's Sydney*. McGreevy has chosen his tour guides wisely: all have what they call in advertising, a high recognition factor — a key to successful television sales. Furthermore, they ooze respectability, are literati, somehow associating this series with a cultural purity that is hard to resist. A good sell. Ripe for marketing. Corporate filmmaking on the march. I've never seen a film about a city made for a mass audience, with so slight a purpose.

Living in Toronto myself. I feel self-

consciously pressured to like any film about home. So to save my conscience, let me say that *Glenn Gould's Toronto* is professional, competent, mildly amusing average entertainment. *Experiencing* this film was quite another matter.

Documentary film has to have a purpose. In 1928, the German filmmaker Walter Ruttmann made *Berlin: Symphony of a City*: editing as movement, movement as the pulse of life in a great metropolis from dawn to dawn. Ruttmann's film is the original film poem of the city as an organizing force in our lives, as a core to contemporary existence. Willard Van Dyke in 1939 made his contribution with *The City*. Shot in New York, the film condemned the problems of city life and welcomed the possibilities of renewed urban life in planned suburbs. The film's message has proved to be a pipedream, but it still exudes a passion and concern lacking in the Glenn Gould film. More recently the city has been the focal point of experimental films — the beauty of cities in Haanstra's *Mirrors of Holland* (1950), and their potential for playfulness