



Paul Verhoeven's *The Fourth Man*



Ate de Jong's *Burning Love*



Peter Oosthoek's *Second Wind*



Annette Apon's *Giovanni*

Making waves

The Netherlands' feature film boom

by Patricia B. Rozema

If Alvin Toffler is right, political and cultural dwarfs like Canada will eventually be able to stop struggling against the wave of homogenization and relax into a distinctive and secure sense of self. When the global village breaks up into discrete cultural communities again, all the fuss about our elephantine neighbour should cease since our neighbour will also undergo the process of decentralization of power and fragmentation of influence. This "Third Wave" will, it can be inferred, wash away the film community's fixation on strictly Cana-

dian content and let us get on with the business of making films we like, films that speak to us.

Looking at the developments in a progressive little country like the Netherlands, Toffler's speculations may hold some water. Like us, the Dutch failed for years to carve out an artistic niche for themselves, let alone leave a mark on the international consciousness. Hans Brinker, the boy who put his finger in the dyke, is considered by many to be the quintessential Dutch story. It was, ironically, the concoction of a born-and-bred American, Mary Elizabeth Dodge, in 1866. While centuries of shipping trade and political tolerance created fertile ground for the ideas and languages of other cultures, few visitors to Holland brought back anything more interesting than images of windmills

and wooden shoes. There was once Rembrandt and Van Gogh, but how long ago was that?

Twentieth-century popular culture was largely derivative. Pop musicians almost always sang in English. Television broadcast the subtitled dramas of France, Germany, Britain, Italy, Sweden and, of course, the U.S. elephant. Although craftsmen like Bert Haanstra and Fons Radde-makker managed to build up a respectable documentary tradition, myths and matters of the heart were left to the dream-makers of other lands.

This well-heeled, highly socialized democracy provides ample support to its visual artists — a guaranteed wage. Theatre and music also fare well. But until recently feature film was still considered too frivolous for the Calvinist mentality that held sway. The sorry

state of affairs in features prompted Remco Campert, the Dutch author, to declare at the end of the '60s: "The Dutch feature film situation is like a monk's self-immolation. It is noble, it is terrible to behold, and it leaves nothing behind."

Ironically, one of Remco Campert's novels is scheduled to be produced and directed next year by Rob Houwer, the man often credited with launching Holland's film boom in the early '70s and still referred to by "Variety" as the backbone of Dutch cinema. In the course of little more than a decade, feature film in the Netherlands has evolved from laughable inadequacy to the point where the 1982 Berlin festival selects no less than nine Dutch productions as representative of the "Dutch New Wave." Warner Bros. picks up Dick Maas' first feature

The Lift for world distribution and the Toronto Festival of Festival's bestows the 1983 International Critics Award on Paul Verhoeven's *The Fourth Man* (produced by Rob Houwer).

With the help of relatively handsome government subsidies, the Netherlands has managed to build a foundation for a spirited and enduring film culture. Things are a little shaky at the moment since the viewing peak in the home market has been reached and the funding system is undergoing an overhaul, but the foundation seems solid enough to allow the graduates of Holland's subsidy system to make a confident leap into the international market while the well-nurtured makers of smaller, more artistic films have never had it so good.

"When I began making films here in the early '70s," says producer Rob Houwer, "I couldn't believe that the Dutch wouldn't be interested in films in their own language and about themselves." And he was right. The appetite for indigenous product was and is voracious. As Peter Cowie writes in his book, "Dutch Cinema": "Dutch audiences had always assumed that films, like cars and watches, were best imported from abroad. They were, quite literally, unaccustomed to hearing their own language on the screen." But after overcoming the shock of having the camouflage of a foreign tongue stripped away, they came out in hordes. On the average, Dutch-made films comprise a mere two to three percent of the total number of films shown annually – yet they draw between 10 and 15 percent of the total audience, even rising as high as a remarkable 18.3 percent. In 1980, for instance, *Spetters* by Paul Verhoeven quickly rose to the top of the box-office list and surpassed such English-language giants as *Kramer vs. Kramer*, *Apocalypse Now*, *Being There* and *Manhattan*. The Dutch love to see their own films.

Although language is an important factor, the interest seems to be more than linguistic. The novelty has long since worn off but Dutch films still attract a huge portion of total audiences. "Even though we aren't a terribly 'nationalistic' country," says Dorothee Verdaasdonk, professor of Dutch film and board member on the new Film Fund, "we are just curious about each other and interested by national issues – in fact, the more typically Dutch a film is, the more successful the film is on the domestic market." She doesn't see this introversion as typically Dutch: "It's typically European to concentrate on your own country." By contrast, she claims, Australian films are as internationally popular as they are, not because they are aimed at the Australian mentality, but because they imitate the Americans. Until recently, however, filmmakers in the Netherlands didn't concern themselves with international sales since, as producer/director Willem Thijssen explains, "the biggest producers made films mainly for the Dutch market since they could make back their investment here at home – exports were cream." Although he's referring to private investment and not government investment (which is paid back last) the Dutch are still in an enviable position compared to Canada's average home pay-back of about 30 percent of the budget for independent productions.

Reasons for the boom vary. Frans Westra, director of Film House in Groningen, speculates that "we are witnessing a reaction to the repression, it's a creative explosion after years of Calvi-

nist restraint." Others point to the establishment of a national film school, the Netherlands Film Academy in 1958, which has brought a generation of well-trained filmmakers to maturity. Rob Houwer, the pioneer of the feature industry, claims he made a personal decision in 1970 to build a market in the Netherlands.

Even Houwer, a man not prone to excessive modesty, admits that he couldn't have done it without the government subsidies. The unique system in Holland does seem to create a hospitable climate for native producers and directors. Almost all films – from the most commercial to the most exotic – are made with the assistance of one of the government's two granting organizations: the Production Fund or the Film Fund. (In an effort to streamline the system, the Film Fund was set up in January this year to take over the administration of grants for features classified as "artistic" from the Production Fund and a direct subsidy for shorts, documentaries and experimental films formerly operated by the ministry of Culture.)

The Production Fund supplies up to 60 percent of the budget of regular commercial films. The Film Fund will contribute up to 90 percent for artistic, non-commercial pictures. If a film turns a profit the producer must pay back 120 percent of the loan. The extra 20 percent is then rechannelled into the Fund to assist other films. Some say the 20 percent is too high, others say it's too low, but most agree that it's a sensible system. If, on the other hand, a film does not make a profit, the government contribution takes the form of a grant. Even after the most abysmal flop, a producer can approach the Production Fund on another project with no debts hanging over his or her head.

The requirements are fairly straightforward. All applications must be represented by a producer – even if only to get script development money (65% of these requests are filled). All applications must have a distribution guarantee, preferably with a distributor willing to invest between 10 and 30 percent of the budget. The Council for the Arts then evaluates the project on the basis of its financial, artistic, and technical solidity. About 71 percent of requests for contribution are approved.

Unlike in Canada, where the CFDC demands first recoupment position, the Dutch put the government last. Recoupment structures do vary, but generally the distributor gets the release costs and advance investment back first. The producer and private investors are next in line and finally the Production Fund or Film Fund. When 120 percent of the Fund's investment is paid the remainder goes to the producer. The set-up in Holland ensures that the film will actually be seen and limits the risk for producers and private investors.

The total budget of the two funds amounts to about 9.2 million guilders with the Production Fund handling about 6 million and the Film Fund 3.2 million (total in dollars: \$4 million). The ministry of Culture contributes the lionshare but the Netherlands Biscop Bond (NBB), a powerful association of private producers, distributors and exhibitors maintains the majority of voting members on the Production Fund's board. The composition of the Film Fund's board still remains to be determined. At the time of writing rumour suggested the board would also have a strong, if not dominating, private presence.

Four million dollars may seem

like a measly amount, and compared to Germany and France it is. (As a rough point of comparison, Canadian grants to independent filmmakers for '82-83 amounted to \$565,000 from the Canada Council, and, for Ontario only, \$400,000 from the the Ontario Arts Council.) When making any comparison, however, it is important to realize that the average Dutch commercial feature, thanks to an absence of unions, has a total budget of about 1 million guilders (\$270,000.) The largest budget in Dutch film history was 7 million guilders (\$2.9m).

Both necessity and design have kept Dutch film budgets lean. Until recently film just wasn't considered a valid art form. Orchestras, for instance, receive almost 80 guilders per seat from the government while film currently gets just over one guilder per seat. But there also seems to be a deliberate effort to concentrate on less extravagant features. "We don't want to make action extravaganzas, leave that to the Americans," says Maarten Muller, policy advisor for the Ministry of Culture.

More money is, in fact, on the horizon. At the opening of the third annual Dutch Film Days festival in September '83, E.H. Brinkman, minister of Culture, announced an additional 9 million guilders (\$3.8m) to be divided between the Production Fund and the Film Fund. In light of the drastic cuts planned for the other arts and much slashing of civil servants wages this year, the new money reflects a solid commitment to the dream-makers in the twentieth century art form.

But not everyone is optimistic about the future. Despite the large number of films being produced (19 in '83), the market for them is shrinking. Total admissions have been dropping steadily since the '50s but they have been dropping especially quickly in the last few years: from 30.5 million viewers in 1978 to 22 million in 1982. Although Dutch-made features pull in a relatively large portion of the audience pie, the pie itself is getting smaller.

The one faction of the industry that is most distressed by the current situation is the commercial producers – the makers of films that need a large audience to break even. Rob Houwer, for instance, the most successful producer in Holland (though recently rivaled by Matthijs van Heijningen of *The Lift*) says, "For me to think I could continue to draw out 3.5 million people in a land of 14 million as I have done – well, it's foolish, it was an aberration that couldn't last." In little more than a decade he has put four films on "Variety's" list of 50 top-grossing films (*Turkish Delight*, *Soldier of Orange*, *Cathy Tippel*, and *Business is Business*). In 1983 he went on to produce three more features (a record in Holland). All his films were shot in Dutch, with Dutch actors and primarily on Dutch soil. "Next year, I'm going to produce films in English and shoot foreign actors in locations outside of the Netherlands." He says he's reached the limits of expansion within his native country, which isn't surprising given his astounding success rate and virtual dominance of the commercial market for a decade. "We've reached the saturation point – people just aren't coming to the cinema anymore – for Dutch films or foreign films... It makes me sad to leave my national borders but it's a matter of survival."

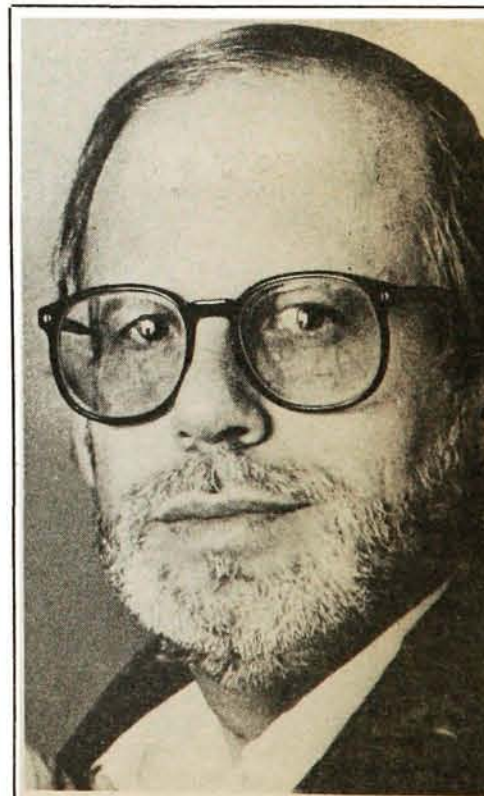
Whether Houwer's financial survival is actually at stake is highly debatable.



• director Annette Apon

But in order to continue his remarkable expansion he has made the, some say inevitable, decision (familiar to Canadians) to leave his national nest and compete on the world stage – using the language, actors and locations of the bigtime. He leaves the government's support behind but he admits that his real goal has always been bigger than Holland alone could give him: "I really want to get at least one film on the international hitlist before I quit."

For other commercial filmmakers, international expansion is necessary for survival. Some are adding great chunks to their budgets for dubbing, others are attempting to sell their features to television as mini-series. Not only do they have a shrinking home market to deal



• producer Rob Houwer

with, but extensive video piracy, the imminent introduction of pay-cable and relatively little money available from television has several of the producers of commercial fare looking outside Dutch borders.

It is important to remember that these bigger players not only wouldn't have been able to fortify their positions when the viewership peaked but they wouldn't have existed at all without the government subsidy system. The government has provided and continues to provide a

secure environment for the smaller filmmakers, the filmmakers who can't, for instance, choose to forfeit government assistance in order to make a picture with foreign actors on foreign soil. This policy has smaller, non-commercial filmmakers thriving.

Not only is the art circuit healthy but it's growing. Distributors for both local and international art films are by and large safe from video piracy. Exhibitors find that the largely student, film buff and intellectual crowds are not only

continuing to come out to the 70 art-circuit screens around the country but they're coming out more often. Over half of box-office business emanates from bijou halls of between 100 and 300 seats. The third annual Dutch Film Days festival in Utrecht has heightened the consciousness of Holland's "New Wave" and provided a good opportunity for sales to other countries. These filmmakers are obviously happy about the new Film Fund designed to assist artistic, commercially non-viable films

presenting ideas and issues from a distinctly Dutch point of view. The government seems intent on cultivating a bank of filmmakers who wouldn't or couldn't make it on the commercial circuit. Although the Houwers and van Heijningens can still get funding, they are seen as the industry's adults who are now more than able to fend for themselves.

Obviously, some of the more established commercial filmmakers are less than thrilled with the government's focus on more "difficult" films. Wim Verstappen,

Producer/director George Sluizer

by Gordon Martin

Like their Canadian colleagues, Dutch filmmakers are not exempt from the increasing pressures of a global marketplace and the demands of television for standardized products to meet mass commercial requirements. Their response, like that of directors in this country, has been varied. Some works, destined for domestic consumption only, are tinged with parochialism and are semi-professional at best. Others — such as Ate de Jong's Burning Love, made for well under a million dollars — strive for acceptance in the world commercial arena, but, lacking the so-called production values of their Hollywood models, fall between two stools. Productions of genuine international interest such as The Lift by Dick Maas, made for less than \$500,000 are excellent examples of another option which brings artistic integrity together with talent and the realistic acceptance of the limitations of low budgets.

What might be described as a fourth option is personified in filmmaker George Sluizer. Sluizer embodies a style of working and a commitment to film which would be the envy of Canadian colleagues who truly wish to follow an independent path. His approach to the medium also demonstrates a different definition of internationalism than that which is current in co-production and made-for-export thinking. The cultural integrity in Sluizer's work is based more on the fulfillment of his personal passions rather than simply in the themes and locations which he chooses to illuminate.

Sluizer has directed 23 films including the experimental Clair Obscur (1963), the feature Joao and the Knife (1972), and a trio of films about Palestinians which culminated in Adios Beirut (1983). He

has written screenplays, is a highly-skilled editor, and has produced numerous features and shorts. As well, he has collaborated on productions as diverse as Mike Todd's classic Eighty Days Around the World (assistant director), and Werner Herzog's Fitzcarraldo (which Sluizer produced in Brazil).

Endowed with international roots and a childhood history which has left him sensitive to the margins of society, Sluizer was born in Paris in the early '30s where he lived until the Nazi occupation forced him to flee with his Dutch father and Norwegian mother. Nine moves and as many years later, he left Portugal and England behind and settled in Holland. After completing secondary school, he worked at a variety of jobs ranging from tram conductor in Oslo to a year in the Dutch merchant navy.

During this period he began to write, driven by an intrinsic response to the new experiences in which he was immersed. Deciding that he "could play better with images than words", Sluizer was drawn to filmmaking.

Following this decision to make film his means of expression he worked briefly in a Dutch studio, studied at the Paris Film School (IDHEC), and subsequently apprenticed with director Bert Haanstra.

Although much of his work remains little-known in Canada, his Hold Back the Sea (1961), a short documentary which has a record 15,000 prints in worldwide distribution; Yankee Sails Across Europe (1966), The Lonely Dorymen (1967), and Siberia, the Endless Horizon (1968) were highly-acclaimed CBS telecasts; and his feature Twice a Woman was shown in competition at the 1979 Montreal World Film Festival.

Cinema Canada: Why do you accept projects which take you away from your own films?

George Sluizer: It's very pleasant to share your knowledge, although you really can't pass on experience. I have a pedagogical side which draws me in to teaching and producing. I feel obliged particularly to

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help the younger generations. I cannot make social films with social comments if I don't try to act my life accordingly.

That's why I produce for others. I work mostly with young people or those who are considered impossible. I can do it because I know what craziness is. It doesn't repulse me.

Being on the Council of Arts for seven years was part of this thinking. If it took away one or two films so what! Much of it was not what I like

to do — committees, drafting proposals, reading thousands of project outlines. But it was my time to be a social person as well as an individual artist. It's so easy to say that the world should be reformed yet turn your back on efforts to deal with the situation.

Cinema Canada: Have you no urge to "make it big"? What motivates your filmmaking?

George Sluizer: My films spring from passions. I never really had the need to become a big name or to make it. There were moments when I was tempted, but soon one realizes that it's much more interesting to be oneself than to be a copy of Mr. Hitchcock or Mr. Renoir!

I had my "Oscars" with my first film (*Hold Back The Sea*, 1961, received 18 awards including a Silver Bear at Berlin and a First Prize at Cork) and got it over with. I realized they meant no more than passing and little pleasures. Also I never aspired to money. The only ambition was to make another film and not necessarily a more expensive one.

In 1967 or '68 I broke with the classical approach that bigger is better. When you've had a success people ask you to make another film just like it. But a success for me is important as a basis to go on and make something different. I've had to explain that the reason someone liked what I did was that it differed from my previous film. Films are interesting because they are discoveries.

Cinema Canada: Do you reject film as a commercial object?

George Sluizer: I don't believe in polarizing art and commerce. The whole range is valid, the most experimental and the most commercial. Commercial to me means that many people want to see a film. Is there anything wrong with that? If twenty million people want to see an experimental film then it becomes a commercial film. *The Lonely Dorymen* is both.

Some commercially-oriented people ask why money should go to films which no one sees. Those are the forerunners of the commercial cinema. For example *Last Year at Marienbad* and *Hiroshima Mon Amour* were difficult films which didn't bring in huge box offices. But if you examine them, the techniques of filmmaking which are used, even the flash forwards, found their way ten years later into American commer-

cial successes. Even Bunuel's surrealism is absorbed forty years later and used in horror films by de Palma or whoever. If you cut out the difficult film from the commercial success will not go forward.

Films like *Porky's* should be accepted by the film community because they may blaze a trail which may make other films possible — ones in which I personally would be more interested.

Cinema Canada: What was so special about Brazil, where you produced Fitzcarraldo?

George Sluizer: I fell in love with Latin America, with Brazil. I liked the sparkle in the eyes of the people. They are poor and seem to have no future, yet there is life and music in their faces. There is poetry and music. The poorer people are, the less money-minded they seem to be.

Cinema Canada: You speak eight languages. Is your understanding of languages crucial to your filmmaking?

George Sluizer: My sense of perfection was partly responsible for my learning languages. When I was going to make *Siberia, the Endless Horizon* I decided to learn some Russian. Very quickly I exceeded the minimal level. I was pushed to learn enough to read Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and Pushkin in the original and have the full feeling. I don't want to miss anything of the best.

In the same way I learned Portuguese. I wanted to make a film in Brazil based on Odylo Costa's book *A Faca e o Rio*. The attraction was so strong.

When I started making films in Lebanon in 1975 I learned Arabic so I could talk directly with people. I don't want interpreters. One of my talents is to get something from people because I can communicate. If I can't, why am I going there? You can send an ABC team into Beirut for three days and they can ask all the questions... But the difference when you speak the language is that they confide in you and that they look in a certain way has to do with the fact that they can talk to you.

Cinema Canada: With only a quarter of your films set in Holland, you've been criticized for not making Dutch films because you work away from home. What's your idea of cultural identity?

George Sluizer: Where do you put your definitions? I make Dutch films

director of *Blue Movie*, *Pastorale 1943*, and *The Forbidden Bacchanal*, writes that "... the majority of upcoming pictures are unlikely bets for general cinemas. Most are intended for tiny art houses and are aimed at a small but influential section of Dutch society, a cultural, political elite." These cognoscenti, he claims, control the allocation of subsidies but don't concern themselves with the bread and butter of the industry—commercial film. Verstappen also complains that art films are

actually putting up stiff competition with commercial releases for media attention. In a country where the media are the primary method of promotion for films and in a month like last September when four Dutch films were released simultaneously, the fight for print and television attention is fierce. Although this situation wasn't orchestrated by the government it could be seen as a testament to its success at building up the non-commercial films to a position of prominence.

Although all the factions of the film community aren't equally pleased at the moment, the Dutch seem to have devised a basically equitable subsidy system: a little money for those who can make a lot, more for those who can't but some for almost everyone. And it seems to work. The commercial filmmakers have acquired enough expertise to satisfy the home audiences and can now make a confident leap into the international film world. The makers of more daring and thoughtful non-commercial films

continue to be nurtured at home. If their uniquely Dutch vision happens to translate well onto foreign screens—so much the better, but world approval isn't critical to their survival. It is hoped that at some point they too can stand on their own at the box-office. If not, the expense will be tolerated because, as film professor Dorothee Verdaasdonk puts it, "The government in the Netherlands isn't in the business of funding a film industry but of nurturing a film culture."

Internationalist with a difference

even if I'm filming in Brazil. My mind has been shaped by Dutch or at least North European circumstances. When I go abroad I take that element with me. If you were to ask me if *João...* is Brazilian or Dutch I'd say it is Dutch. I think you always keep your basic cultural background wherever you go. Certainly that's valid for anyone with a minimum of personality and background.

Most of my professional influences come from the Dutch even if I try to push them away. In fact that's just another way of acknowledging them.

Your cultural identity is very personal. It's being in love with what surrounds you. When I'm in some parts of Europe I feel that this is where my body should be, with this air, these flowers, and these hills which are my hills. I don't say that other hills are not as beautiful, but there is "a fit." It must have a lot to do with childhood, with the first images one has, the first memories... those are the ones you are very close to.

Cinema Canada: From 1974 to 1980 you served on the Dutch Ministry of Culture's Council of Arts. Do you favour government intervention in cinema and national film policies?

George Sluizer: Feeling is one thing, the politics of film is another. I've been in this aspect for seven years in Holland. We had to think about what was Dutch film and what was not, and if we should give subsidies. I've had many problems myself because of making films abroad

which we weren't "supposed" to do if we wanted financial support.

On a policy level one must encourage national culture. But one should not be as strict as many countries are. I don't think it matters whether the crew members are Dutch or whether they're Canadian. The barriers become so rigid that there are no openings for the exceptions. I believe in exceptions. Perhaps 80% of the rules should be protective. But to protect it you must open the door at least 20% otherwise you are killing your culture through the narrowness of your policy.

Every country needs a unique policy to deal with its own situation. It's part of the duty of government to support film just as it is to support medical and social needs. I favour governments creating structures which encourage film to be made and seen without too much of their participation in operational details. Working through intermediary organizations which could be freer of political influence and bureaucratic intransigence than the civil service. And funding decisions must include both artistic and commercial criteria.

Cinema Canada: You've made two 'American' films to date, *Sweetwater Junction* and *The Dutch Connection*. Now you've working on a feature film to be shot in Texas this summer. What attracts you to America?

George Sluizer: America pulls me for two reasons. One is my general interest, curiosity if you like, for a

new place. The other, as banal as it may seem, is that it's the heart of show business, of the world I work in.

There's another attraction too. Individuals there can make decisions more quickly and readily on their own. In Europe we are too democratic and socialized in some ways. We have to go through many committees to make a decision. It's slow and boring and people are often timid.

Cinema Canada: You've often made films with the sponsorship of a broadcaster or with television audiences in mind. This includes a series of three for National Geographic made in the mid '60s and broadcast by CBS, as well as your most recent films, *Tepito Si*, and *Adios Beirut*. Do you fit easily into the demands of television?

George Sluizer: I'm a cinema person which means that I work with one camera, choose my angles beforehand, and structure my story ahead. There is a fundamental difference with television. You tend with it to set up a situation and hope you'll get something from the choices which come up on the monitors.

For me, I don't need that kind of choice if I have something to say. My basic concept directs me into inventing numerous camera positions. Similar consequences are found in style, actors, and artistic "messages" ... Film is more related to an author's situation.

Of course with the films for National Geographic I had to observe certain rules of broadcast. I had to compete with Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jr. who came on the other channels part way through my shows. And I succeeded in holding the audience with *The Lonely Dorymen* for example. I was very popular for that!

Although it was a challenge, I didn't really like it. I'm a purist and it was tough adjusting.

Cinema Canada: Which aspect of filmmaking attracts you the most?

George Sluizer: Editing is the most enjoyable and rewarding part of the process for me. You're rid of all the extraneous problems and you're alone in a little room where you can concentrate on all that went before. When shots click and cuts work it's like innumerable orgasms. That's where it all comes together... comes to life. Both sides... the images you knew you planned for and those

things which you had put there without knowing it.

As a writer my two forms are basically poetry and essays, not novels. Feature films are more novel-type. That's why I collaborate on them with people who are good storytellers. I know what I want and can see images and situations. But I often need the help of someone who can express them well in words.

I have a musical eye. Rhythm and tension are among the main things I'm after. I'm always very aware of the tensions between images.

Producing has taken its toll on Sluizer and he sometimes feels like retreating from the fray to write poetry. But his wife and business partner Anne Lardon has shouldered many of the business burdens—burdens exacerbated by his penchant for working outside the mainstream.

The distribution of his films is far from easy. Twice a Woman, a feature produced in 1979 starring Bibi Andersson and Anthony Perkins, remains in relative obscurity because of legal-technical problems.

But he is already involved in new ventures. This summer he hopes to shoot Red Desert Penitentiary, a feature based on a story by Tim Krabbe, if financing can be arranged in time. It is a marvellous satire about freedom and justice and illusion, set in Texas. Not content with the conventional challenges inherent in such a project, Sluizer is approaching it as a participational low-budget production with a high level of improvisation. It has already been adopted as a community project in the town where it will be shot.

Two other film ideas remain to be exercised. He has already invested much time and money in them. They are difficult undertakings. But he expects a lot of both himself and his world. His colleague, Dutch novelist Max Dendermonde who worked with Sluizer on the screenplay Rage, said of him, "He will not settle for less than the highest standard of truth in every scene. He avoids all tricks, all clichés, and is content with the ultimate simplicity. Every movement, every word, has to be true, and permeated with a vital tension."

The option to filmmaking represented by George Sluizer finds cultural integrity coincidental with personal integrity and relegates such words as commerce, art, and policy to secondary roles. Surely an option worth considering.



● Sluizer, right, acting in his current production, director Rudolf van den Berg's feature, *La place de la Bastille*