

Zaloum picks top two films in Montreal fest competition

Jean Zaloum can pick the winners. Moreover, he knows how to "work a festival" to make sure that his films get the notice they deserve. It is no coincidence that *El Norte*, chosen best film of the festival, and *La Femme publique*, chosen the most popular film and awarded a jury prize at the World Film Festival, are both being distributed by Les Productions Karim.

Les Productions Karim? "My interest in film has always been the creation, the production. It's simply circumstance which has made me a distributor... a salesman," he told Cinema Canada, several days before the awards were given. And, for Zaloum, artistic involvement in film is the key to making distribution work.

He got in on *La Femme publique* during its production, almost a year ago. It was the evident talent of Andrzej Zulawski, the Polish director, that convinced him to participate in the French film. He now tells the French-Canadian rights to the film which was the most excessive, outrageous, fantastic and - the public said so - popular of the festival. *La Femme publique* is now playing on four screens in Montreal.

As for *El Norte*, Zaloum simply walked into The Music Hall cinema in Los Angeles to see a film which was in commercial run, and about which the papers were saying provocative things. When the audience applauded at the end, he knew it too was a winner. He bought the Canadian rights, convinced Serge Losique to enter both films in competition in Montreal, booked theatres for the day the festival ended, and is now watching the crowds form to see this American film with its Spanish track and moving story of illegal immigration from Guatemala to the States.

Not abandoning his first love, Zaloum has two production projects in the works. The first, an original screenplay by Marcel Dubé entitled *Le Soleil se lève à l'aube* (Dubé also wrote *Les Beaux Dimanches* for which Zaloum was



Jean Zaloum



Valérie Kaprisky

associate producer in the '70s) is being read by Valérie Kaprisky, the young "public woman" of Zulawski's film. The second, *Breaking All the Rules*, capitalizes on the breakdance fad and will be made in English.

Once again, the success of Jean Zaloum shows that, given a chance to distribute quality films which have box-office potential, Canadian distributors will turn over their experience and their money into Canadian productions.

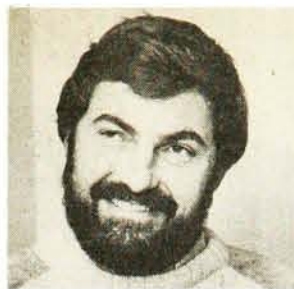
Bowie hits double-header

"A Real Writer is loaded with Talent. A TV writer is loaded with gin." That was Doug Bowie in 1978, writing an ironic article in Cinema Canada about the gulf which separated those who worked on features and those who wrote for television. Today, Bowie is bridging that gulf with what must be a first for Canadian scriptwriters: on Aug. 14, two of his scripts went before the cameras. In Toronto, the CBC began production on a mini-series entitled *Love and Larceny* while, in Montreal, the theatrical feature *The Boy*

in *Blue* began principal photography.

Love and Larceny finally brings us the story of the notorious Betsy Bigley, alias (among other names), Mrs. Chadwick. Bowie's screenplay is based on the true story of the lady who could bilk the powerful men of her world out of a lot of cash, but is not based on the book, nor on the screenplay previously developed by Harry Gulkin for his film. In an interesting turn-about, Cleveland - the original site of her goings-on - has been dropped from the script in lieu of New York and Montreal. This turn-of-the-century story is directed by Rob Iscove and stars Jennifer Dale.

Meanwhile, Dale's sister Cynthia, holds the lead in Bowie's other film, *The Boy in Blue*. Originally developed with John Trent, who interested 20th-Century Fox in the project, Bowie reports that the script went from Fox to I.C.C. via John Kemeny who was in the right place at the right time to bring the project back to Canada. The "boy" of the title, Ned Hanlan, was the best known public figure in Canada a hundred years ago, and Canada's first world-champion athlete in a time we when



Doug Bowie



Jennifer Dale



Cynthia Dale

rowing was a betting sport. "In the States, Hanlan would be a legend. In Canada, he's simply forgotten," sums up Bowie. But as more film writers turn to television, one can now hope that their scripts will turn Canadian heroes into legends too.

Harcourt to indy production

TORONTO - Nada Harcourt, Area Head of Children's Television for the CBC, has been appointed executive in charge of independent production in the CBC's drama department.

Prior to joining the Drama Department, Harcourt was responsible for Children's Television where she introduced award-winning series to the CBC schedule such as *Going Great*, *The Edison Twins*, *Kids of Degraffi Street* and *Sons and Daughters*. In her new role in TV Drama she will be overseeing the production of *Hockey Night*, *Danger Bay* and *Schaeffer and the Raccoons*.

In making the announcement, Jack Craine, director of television programming for the CBC English Network, said, "with her entrepreneurial skills, Nada Harcourt has played a key part in developing the CBC's relationship with

independent producers, exploiting the new opportunities provided by the Broadcast Development Fund of Telefilm Canada."

Harcourt is a native of Toronto. She was



Nada Harcourt

educated at the University of Toronto and Humber-side Collegiate. Harcourt has been with the CBC since 1961.

Rudolph chooses Bujold and brings her back in great role

It was a quirky, low-budget film, *Choose Me*, and the insistence of its director Alan Rudolph, which brought Geneviève Bujold out of a virtual retirement and put her back in front of the cameras.

"I was scared, simply not ready to go back to work. The first day of the shoot, I couldn't even leave the house. I took the phone off the hook and watched television all day. That evening I cut my hair, and the next day I showed up for work. What I was paid to do that film was less than my *per diem* here in Montreal." That may be so, but Bujold says making the film was one of the highs of recent years. Her satisfaction with her role and her performance gave her the courage to launch herself into *Tightrope* with Clint Eastwood, and will bring her to Montreal to do live theatre next fall.



Geneviève Bujold

Between them, Rudolph and Bujold created excitement as they talked about making *Choose Me* in 23 days, researching Bujold's role as a psychologist with a phone-in talk show about sex and about the odd love triangles created with the two other leads, Keith Carradine and Lesley Ann Warren. They were happy with the critical enthusiasm about the film - one of the funniest, most enjoyable of the festival - and told the press about "the power of poverty" and the creative excitement generated by the pressures of low-budget filmmaking. "What you can buy with more money you don't really want," says Rudolph, who insists that "you don't join the club with a film like this," but that he's not tempted to do any other kind of filmmaking, despite his flirt

with the studios as the pick-up director of *The Songwriter* with Chris Christofferson and Willy Nelson.

As for Bujold, she has found a new confidence. "Making *Monsignor* was the end of something. I said to myself 'I can't give more than that.'" But what with Rudolph knocking at the door, insisting that she would have more fun making his film for nothing than she had ever had, she rose to the occasion. "Now my life is simply unfolding and, for the moment, it's unfolding perfectly."

Perlmutter to Cinema Canada

The editors of Cinema Canada are pleased to welcome Tom Perlmutter as the magazine's full-time staff writer/reporter in Toronto.

Perlmutter, 36, holds an MBA from the University of Toronto and did graduate study at Oxford following an undergraduate degree at McGill. He returned to Canada two years ago after residing in England for 10 years during which time he developed wide experience in journalism and publishing both as a writer and editor with leading British and Anglo-American publishing houses such as Octopus Publishing and Holt, Rinehart & Winston. He



Tom Perlmutter

has written extensively on film, and is the author of *War Movies* (1974).

Hungarian-born, Perlmutter grew up in Montreal, but now resides with his two children in Toronto. As Cinema Canada's Toronto staffer, he will be bringing his knowledge of film and business to the magazine's expanding coverage of Canadian film and television production.

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