

TORONTO FILMMAKERS' CO-OP

The first 1974 activity of the Co-op was the coming together of the troops for the 1973 annual meeting. But anyway . . .

Our new space at 406 Jarvis is large enough for most Co-op activities but the big meeting of the year strained its seams. The 50 odd members who attended spilled over into the offices of our house mates – Cinema Canada and the Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution Centre – and explored the new screening and editing rooms, the supergraphic walls, the six foot Canadian flag, and generally gave the house a seal of approval.

Thanks to the Canada Council, the Co-op budget discussed at the meeting was considerably larger than we've been used to. But still the running debate on Co-op priorities continued. Rick Hancox led the side voting for focusing money and energy on equipment and workshops rather than spreading it to include RUSHES, the long established if erratic Co-op newsletter, public screenings and political activities. Because of the diversity of interests represented in the Co-op, this seems destined to be a perennial issue in our ranks. Through mailings, publications, and screenings the Co-op serves a wide constituency primarily interested in information. It also serves a smaller, more active, constituency primarily interested in making films – Co-op members produced 30 films last year. This group naturally favors the production services, equipment, discounts and training which the Co-op offers.

There is an old frustration with lack of equipment and the Co-op's failure to produce its own films. Last year this resulted in a direction from the annual meeting to undertake Co-op production. The Co-op script competition for an entry in the CFDC's \$100,000 category, and the Co-op application for a Canada Council grant to produce a series of educational films based on the workshop program, were the result of that directive. To date both projects have failed to get to the production stage – not that the Co-op is alone with that problem – and both are still being pursued.

The issue was not resolved at the meeting but the Executive Committee has subsequently decided to maintain RUSHES and screenings, while putting

emphasis on workshops and equipment.

Suzanne DePoe, a newly elected member of the Co-op's Executive Committee, reported to the meeting on the work of the Committee on Television (see OPINION elsewhere in this issue) which has prepared a definitive critique of the CBC to be put forward as an intervention to the CBC's license renewal application when it comes up before the CRTC. The meeting voted to prepare a Co-op submission outlining specific effects of CBC programming policy on independent filmmakers, and Executive Committee member George Csaba Koller offered to edit this submission for the February 4 deadline of the CRTC.

Election of a new ten member Executive Committee was last on the agenda. And the winners were:

Patrick Lee – founding member of the Co-op and independent filmmaker

Jock Brandeis – filmmaker of many talents and many credits including D.O.P. on *Diary of a Sinner*

Rick Hancox – filmmaker and educator par excellence

Keith Lock – independent filmmaker and part of the Co-op bedrock
Raphael Bendahan – filmmaker and photographer and a member of last year's Executive Committee

George Csaba Koller – filmmaker as well as editor and publisher of this very magazine

Suzanne DePoe – political organizer and member of Memo From Turner and the Committee on Television

Frederik Manter – director of the Canadian Filmmaker's Distribution Centre and a Co-op neighbour

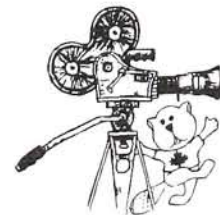
Ági Ibranyi-Kiss – managing editor of Cinema Canada, plant lover, and long involved Co-op member

Kirwan Cox – none of the above but well known anyway.

Because the Co-op has, at long last, been incorporated, it was necessary for the Executive Committee to elect a slate of officers with titles appropriate only to Bay Street. They are too tedious to go into but as a result Keith Lock can now tell census takers he is "Chairman of the Board of Directors" of the TFC, instead of an unemployed filmmaker.

The winter workshop program began January 15 with camera and editing taught by Richard Leiterman and John Marshall respectively. The enrollment in these two workshops totalled 30 and left almost as many on the waiting list. Other workshops in sound, animation, lighting, basic filmmaking, and a women's workshop in camera and sound follow and are heavily booked. The workshops run 5-10 weeks at a cost of \$1 a session to Co-op members and this series will have well over 100 participants. Co-op members have supplied the program with equipment, facilities, teaching talents, raw stock and, with help from Sheridan College, the means to record some of the sessions on videotape. These tapes will be available to Co-op members and will also be included in a closed circuit distribution system for films produced by film students across the country which is being





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organized by the Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution Centre.

Co-op members are keeping busy in other ways as well. Three of our members – Clarke Mackey, Keith Lock and Jim Anderson – are participating in the Ontario Arts Council's touring "Artist and His Work" program. Clarke is also teaching the Co-op's basic filmmaking workshop. Both Keith and Jim received Canada Council grants to complete their respective films. These awards were made from the new production fund and next deadline for applications for \$5,000, \$10,000 or \$25,000 is Feb. 1.

Rick Hancox has been neg cutting Michael Snow's new film in the Co-op editing room; Michael Ondaatje and Dennis Zahoruk are both completing new films; Joyce Wieland is putting together a new film; Anna McIntyre and Walter Delorey have both sold their short films to CBC.

Underway is the regular screening program for member's films being held every Sunday at 7 p.m. in the screening room. The first of these screenings featured Co-op women filmmakers with Kim Ondaatje bringing her short *Factories* (which has the same subject and delicacy as the prints of her work which Kim has donated to the Co-op walls); Anna McIntyre with her recent CBC sale film *Sights and Sounds of Poland*; and Marie Waisberg with her lyrical *Journals of Susanna Moodie*. Bonnie Kreps' *After the Vote* was also shown and some good discussion was generated which kept people from regretting that they weren't at the Dylan concert – our competition for the evening.

Coming soon will be *RUSHES*, resurrected as a bi-monthly newsletter. Each issue will contain a section chock full of basic information on filmmaking, the Co-op, the fastest and easiest "hows" and "wheres" for filmmakers, tried and tested by the Co-op, and these sections will be compiled to make an invaluable booklet at the end of the year. *RUSHES* will also contain reports on executive committee meetings, transcriptions of some of the workshops, and much, much more.

Also coming soon is the seminar series – evenings of question and answer with people in various aspects of film. Peter Pearson will be the Co-op's first guest on February 28 at 8 p.m. and will be followed by Robin Spry of the NFB, Rick Hancox discussing film marketing

techniques, and other incredible luminaries.

Following up our successful October screening at the St. Lawrence Centre Town Hall, the Co-op is planning more public screenings of Canadian and Co-op films at the St. Lawrence and elsewhere. Arrangements have been made to show Co-op member's shorts along with the regular features at the new Cinematek. Members with films they would like to see included in these programs please let us know.



The Co-op has been invited to participate in a number of conferences;

Canadian Film Symposium II – February 6-7-8 at the University of Manitoba is to be a gathering of the Government heavies and the film heavies to argue about such things as Canadian content; distribution and exhibition, and film financing. Three Co-op members – Kirwan Cox, Frederik Manter and I will be taking part in panels, and other Co-op members will attend.

Conference on Canadian Quotas to be held this spring in Toronto is intended to unify the efforts being made by artists, academics, playwrights and filmmakers to obtain quotas for Canadian content in their respective areas.

Sensory City – May 2-5 in Toronto will be a multi media exploration of the city and the Co-op will participate in the film portion of this event.

NOTES

– all Co-op members are entitled to free use of editing facilities, screening room, a dubious Bolex and a good Bell & Howell projector. All you have to do is call and book them in advance.

- two new fellow Co-ops began this year in Vancouver and Halifax (by former TFC member Chuck Lapp) report that they are forging ahead with plans and solvent enough to survive the long hard winter.
- the Co-op has submitted several briefs to Government on the idiocy of the distribution/exhibition system in this country, as have several other organizations. At last the basic statistics on the situation are going to be compiled so future representatives will have more hard facts to work with. The Council of Canadian Filmmakers, with a grant from the Ontario Arts Council, has undertaken massive research on the subject. Three Co-op members are on the committee responsible for this research which should be completed by spring.
- Canadian films are to receive much attention this year in other media. No less than six books on the subject, ranging from its history to its politics, are scheduled for publication this fall. A documentary on the history of Canadian film is now being produced for the CBC by Kirwan Cox. So . . . if you've never understood what was going on wait for fall and it will all be made clear.
- in future, general membership meetings of the Co-op will be held four times a year but members and potential members don't have to wait for a meeting to pay dues. Contrary to popular opinion, dues are for a one year, not life, membership. As incentive the Co-op is offering official membership cards engraved with the little fellow at the top of this page, in exchange for your \$5 or \$10.
- Co-op member Peter Rowe is collecting references to our country (Canada) in their (U.S.) films for a new film project. This was a common patronizing practice in American films of the 40's and 50's and they show up with regularity on the T.V. late shows. So if you are a viewer, try to spot them, their relative place (which reel guesstimate) in the film, and the film's title, and drop them off at the Co-op for Peter. He's getting tired of staying up every night.

– Sandra Gathercole
Co-ordinator