

# editorial:

First the good news: André Brassard's *Il Était une Fois dans L'Est* (Once Upon a Time in the East) grossed \$127,000 during its opening week in 6 locations (3,000 seats total) in Québec. "The Exorcist" did \$6,000 less than that, charging more per ticket. The Brassard feature held up well in its second week (\$122,000) and it's still going strong at press time.

And now the bad news: *Cry of the Wild* might make as much as \$8 million gross before the year is over, yet filmmaker Bill Mason still doesn't know if he'll get any royalties from it: he's on staff at the NFB. Some people will get rich, though; a U.S. four-waller and the National Film Board are splitting the take, with only 7 1/2 per cent going to producer Ralph C. Ellis. Even that might come to over half-a-million dollars.

Betty Lee of *The Globe & Mail* is doing a tremendous job unearthing stories like the above, along with other aspects of the Great Canadian Motion Picture Rip-Off.

Clyde Gilmour, regular movie reviewer for *The Toronto Star*, is a new convert to the cause. In a recent article, Gilmour expressed shock at the low-quality U.S. 'product' booked into a first run house in Toronto. "Personally, I have never been a Canadian nationalist in the matter of film distribution," writes Gilmour, but "Canadians can make bad movies just as easily as Americans can. (They can and do sometimes make very good ones, too.) Why shouldn't their regular work get the same chance with the public that is automatically given to any hunk of junk that drifts across the international border?" Mr. Gilmour also did a terrific piece on Cinema Canada, and we're thoroughly grateful.

CBC press releases are easier to read in these post-CRTC hearings days. Less emphasis on imported programming and more on Canadian shows. Great! The CBC is also buying more Canadian films since Pierre Juneau termed their negligence in this field "scandalous." Six major Canadian features are to be shown on the English-network this summer. *The National Dream* is a success and a godsend in terms of countering all that schlock poured into Canadian TV sets from the States. And our independent filmmakers have finally found a showcase, through the efforts of producer Beverly Roberts. Consult your local listings.

Many changes on the distribution/exhibition front. Since leaving Astral, Marty Bockner has set up his own distribution company. Called Saguenay Films (94 Cumberland Street, 9th Floor, Toronto, Ont.), the new outfit hopes to be in first position in the distribution of Canadian films here and abroad. They will give consideration to all Canadian films of merit brought to them. More immediately, they're looking for Canadian features to take to Cannes. Morley Markson's new 35mm feature, *Saviours Are Hard to Find* (formerly *Killing Time*) is definitely going with Bockner, and a September 1st opening is planned in Toronto and other centres.

Saguenay Films will be working very closely with Canadian Theatres, the new exhibition chain which bought National General. They own houses in Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Montreal and other locations, and are willing to buy films independently!

Maybe this could lead the way in keeping some of that \$150,000,000 yearly Canada-wide box office take at home, where it belongs.

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## On the cover:

*One of the 'black humor' scenes in Jack Darcus' Wolf Pen Principle - a new feature made in Vancouver. Photograph by Rob Straight.*

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Advertising Manager: Harris Kirshenbaum (416) 924-8045

Montréal Correspondent: Pierre Latour

Vancouver Correspondent: Peter Bryant

Halifax Correspondent: Charles T. Lapp

Regina Correspondent: Terence St. John Marner

Winnipeg Correspondent: Len Klady

Ottawa Correspondent: Francis Mansbridge

Art Director: Julius Ciss

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Office Address: 406 Jarvis Street, Toronto

Telephone: (416) 924-5953 and 924-8045

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