

# QUÉBEC

## Feature production slow down in Québec

Because of cautious CFDC measures and restricted investments from private sources, feature film production has considerably slowed down in the private sector in Québec.

A few features received approval from the government corporation, but the producers are having a hard time getting technical services agreements and cash flow.

George Kaczender's *Micro Blues* is in the pre-production stage, but nothing is finalised on the financial side. The film is from a script by Kaczender and Douglas Bowie, and is to be produced by his own Montreal company.

Claude Jutra's *Pour le meilleur ou pour le pire* did not go into production as planned, Pierre Lamy is still looking for investors.

Alain Chartrand, who was assistant director on *Les Ordres*, Michel Brault's feature, will be shooting *La Piastre* in early May. From a script by Diane Cailhier and Alain Chartrand, the film will be produced by Marc Daigle for l'Association coopérative des productions audio-visuelles (ACPAV). Shoot is planned in 16mm color to be blown up to 35mm, with François Beauchemin on camera, Claude Beaugrand/sound; Brigitte Sauriol/script. Cast includes Jacques Godin (O.K. Laliberté, Michèle Magny (La Chambre Blanche and Tauréau), Paule Baillargeon (Montréal Blues), Claude Gauthier (Les Ordres), J. Léo Gagnon (Les Dernières Fiançailles) and Rachel Cailhier (Les Maudits Sauvages). Total budget: \$115,000.

Denys Arcand is shooting *Gina* on location in Louisville, a small municipality some 60 miles outside of Montréal. It is to be an intricate plot with two different story lines. One is about a crew filming a political documentary on textile workers. This should be Arcand's final statement on the now famous *On Est Au Coton* affair — the other line deals with a stripper who performs in a local bar. Celine Lomez will play Gina the stripper, André Gagnon (director of photography on *L'Infonie Inachevée*) is playing the fictive news cameraman and Carol Faucher (previously co-editor of *New Canadian Film*) was cast as sound-person. The shooting schedule was planned for 40 days. Alain Dostie — director of photography, Jacques Méthé — assistant director, Serge Beauchemin — sound. Pierre Lamy is executive producer for Les Productions Carle-Lamy. Distribution will be handled by Société

Nouvelle de Cinématographie.

Claude Fournier directed *La Pomme, La Queue et Les Pepins*, a comedy in the style of *Les Deux Femmes en Or*. The film stars Donald Lautrec (Les Chats Bottes) and Han Masson. Claude Fournier and Marie-Josée Raymond are heading a small crew (non-union) which started a conflict with Syndicat National du Cinéma, the local union. A lot of technicians are out of work, and Fournier's decision to have a non-union crew was far from welcome. A protest was organised by the union in front of Rose Films, the production company. Fournier is doing the camerawork in 16mm to be blown up to 35mm. The budget is said to be extremely low, in the neighborhood of \$50,000. Ironically, this feature might be released before *Alien Thunder*, Fournier's big-budget movie, which has been delayed again and again for a year now. (*The original English version of Alien Thunder is playing in western Canada at press time, and a Québec release is imminent.* — ed.)

There is a lot going on at the NFB's French unit. Pierre Perreault is working on his huge Baie James/Abitibi project. The final result might become two or three features on northern Québec and the native peoples inhabiting the area. It is a study of man in a direct cinema approach. Bernard Gosselin was cameraperson, Paul Larose is producer, and Claire Boyer, Suzanne Demers and Monique Fortier are editing.

Marcel Carrière has completed *Trois innocents en Chine*, a documentary that was shot during the month he followed a Canadian ping pong team across the Republic of China. Jacques Bobet is producing. Alain Dostie was the cameraperson and Serge Beauchemin did the sound.

George Dufaux, well known for being director of photography on NFB features, directed *A votre santé*, a feature length documentary shot in a hospital emergency ward. The film is 115 minutes long and it will soon be seen on the CBC's French network.

Werner Nold finished editing *La Gammick*, a feature directed by Jacques Godbout, and produced by Marc Beaudet (Mon Oncle Antoine, Tauréau, O.K. Laliberté) for the NFB. Jean-Pierre Lachapelle was director of photography. The plot is based on the actual murder of a New York Mafia boss by a Québec gunman. Distribution is in an idling stage. (*Perhaps because of Columbia's imminent demise in Canada.* — ed.)

## Recent Québec releases

*Bingo*, Jean-Claude Lord's third feature, was released throughout Québec last week and it was kindly received by the critics. As for the public, only figures will tell and it is too early yet for conclusive grosses. (*Mutual Films claims it's doing well.* — ed.) The film is a politically oriented feature in the Costa-Gavras tradition. It has all the glossy, flawless characteristics that you might expect from a half-a-million dollar movie done by such professionals as Jean-Claude Lebreque, Claude Larue, and Louis Lombardo, who handled the special effects department. It has an international cast, including Willie Lamothe and Alexandra Stewart. A fine commercial feature that uses Québec as a background, rather than a source of inspiration as the films of Arcand, Lefebvre or Frappier.

Société Nouvelle de Cinématographie (same as *Ciné-Art.* — ed.) released *Il était une fois dans l'Est*, André Brassard's first feature film. Based on Michel Tremblay's plays, the storyline is a blend of different situations encountered by his characters. The film is extremely well cast and the acting is near perfect. It received a mild reception from the critics, but it is doing tremendously good business in Montréal. It should be released soon in other major Québec centres. An English-subtitled version is also being made right now.

Willie Lamothe (centre) in *Bingo*



## Pierre Latour



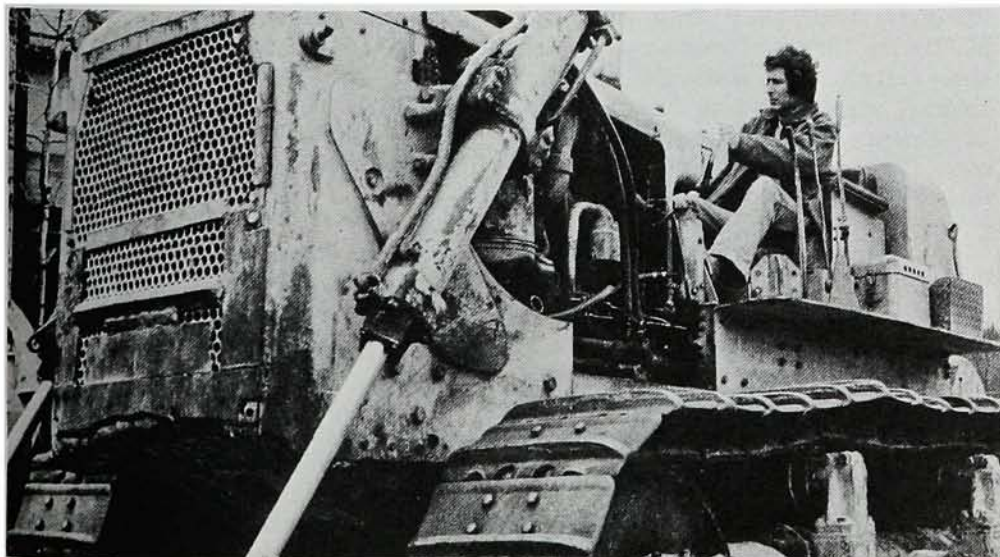
Suzanne Garceau and Jocelyn Bérubé in *Montréal Blues*

*Cry of the Wild* is being released across the country, after a surprisingly good run in the States. It is said to be doing well in Montréal, where it is playing in two versions (French and English) in separate theatres. This film was shown at Cannes last year and it wasn't given a single chance until after that All-American success. *Variety* and box-office figures rule our industry... ask Bill Mason.

*Montréal Blues*, a film directed by Pascal Gélinas that was completed over a year ago, was released by France Films at their St-Denis theatre. It is playing on weekends as a midnight show. From a screenplay by Gélinas and Raymond Cloutier, *Montréal Blues* features the members of the theatre group Le Grand Cirque Ordinaire in the leading roles. It was their second feature, having also starred in Roger Frappier's *Le Grande Film Ordinaire*.

*Bulldozer* completed a three week run in a Montréal theatre, but even

Donald Pilon in *Bulldozer*



though it was warmly received by the critics, it did poor business. The film was shot some three years ago in the Abitibi region and it was the first production by ACPAV (*the Montréal co-op. - ed.*). The low-budget was exhausted, but finally the film was completed with money from Les Films Mutuelles and other private sources. Pierre Harel directed, edited and composed part of the musical score. The cast includes: Donald Pilon, Raymond Levesque, Pauline Julien, Mouffe and Denis André. François Beauchemin directed the photography in super-16mm, and the film was blown up to 35mm for release.

Everyone is working on *Opération Cannes*. Claire Dubuc is in charge of the Montréal office of the Bureau des Festivals. A pre-selection committee has already decided the films that are to be sent to the festival and the titles should be announced shortly. The publicity and promotion work should be oriented in the same way it was last year.



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## APPOINTMENT



T.R. Ide, chairman of the board and chief executive officer, Ontario Educational Communications Authority, is pleased to announce the appointment of Kevin Holen as Director of the Network Development Project of the OECA.

Mr. Holen is Director of Engineering and Technical Services of the OECA and is being seconded to the special project for two years. He will assemble a team to acquire, install, operate and maintain UHF television transmitters at Ottawa, Kitchener, London, Chatham and Windsor to broadcast Educational Television programming.

Mr. Holen began his broadcast career in the formative years of CFTO-TV, Toronto, was among the first broadcasters hired by the Ministry of Education and had a major role in launching the OECA's Toronto station, CICA-TV, Channel 19.