

Special measures for West from Telefilm

VANCOUVER - With the fine-tuning measures to the Broadcast Program Development Fund announced by federal Communications minister Marcel Masse on Mar. 15, Telefilm Canada can as of Apr. 1 use up to 10% of its annual funding to support the development of scripts and production projects. Particular emphasis is being placed on developing eligible projects and scripts in the Atlantic and western provinces, for which some \$2 million have been earmarked.

In parched western Canada, where Telefilm's development programs include all points west of Winnipeg, the news couldn't come sooner. In the first year of Telefilm West's Script and Development Program, applicants totalled 16; of these, seven met with approval. Western applicants to the Broadcast Fund totalled six; of these, four were approved. By September 1984, the fund had accepted another four projects while the Development Program accepted eight. The one petitioner to the Equity Investment Program was rejected because funds weren't securely in place.

But after a hesitant start, things are beginning to pick up.

In Calgary, Telefilm recently backed a program called *Connecting*, which, in a variety/documentary format, deals with the problems of teenage youth.

In Alberta, the Script and Development Program Fund has just given support to *Whispering*, a made-for-TV movie that will be set in Vancouver, and deals with children.

Also accepted for the Development Fund is *Little David Play Your Harp*. This half-hour project is based on a Canadian short story set in Saskatchewan. Though the budget is small, a commitment from a regional broadcaster enabled the program to move into further stages of evolution.

Another Saskatchewan pursuit to receive Development funding is a project called *Break Up*, on the experiences of a family moving into a small town.

In Vancouver, a series called *Serendipity*, based on Persian fairy tales, has been accepted for Development money and will air on the CBC.

In Alberta, the Equity Investment Program will support a project called *Ranch*, which had no easily discernable slot. The ranch of the title was an artistic endeavour created out

of wood on several acres of land. Telefilm felt it was an important cultural work, needy of documentation and commemoration.

With a renewed emphasis on regionalism, the growing number of approvals has begun to put the west in a position to now encourage applicants.

Telefilm loses Lamy and Pearson: industry concerned

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coming to the end of a five-year term. The official said that Masse is continuing discussions with Lamy about a new role for Lamy after his term ends on July 31.

Lamy, a brother-in-law of CBC president Pierre Juneau, came to Telefilm from the CBC where he was vice-president audience relations. Prior to that, Lamy headed the National Film Board for five years. According to a senior DOC official, Lamy learned of his dismissal directly from Masse. Lamy was not available for comment.

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