

Peter Pearson to top Telefilm position

MONTREAL – The official news of Peter Pearson's appointment as executive director of Telefilm Canada came on July 8 as minister of Communications Marcel Masse confirmed the order-in-council appointment. The announcement follows weeks of persistent rumor, and was generally well-received in the film and television industry.

Until last May, Pearson had headed up the Canadian Broadcast Program Development Fund, the number-two post at Telefilm. He resigned that position suddenly and unexpectedly, following the an-

nouncement that Masse had requested André Lamy, the Telefilm executive director, to step down by August 1. Pearson then became an active candidate for the top job, finally beating out others (Ron Cohen, Frank Jacobs, Bill Marshall) rumored to be under consideration.

Pearson has fought in the trenches for Canadian film policy, and was a major voice during the early '70s when he served as president of the Directors Guild of Canada and then as the chairman of the Council of Canadian Filmmakers. On April 25, 1974, he

appeared before the Standing Committee on Broadcasting, Films and Assistance to the Arts and made this statement about filmmaking in Canada:

"We commend the government for its bold concept in taking Canada into the feature film industry.

"The taxpayers have committed \$20 million in expectation of seeing Canadian films for the first time in their neighbourhood theatres. These films have seldom appeared.

"In six years we have learned that the system does not work for Canadians.

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Masse in L.A. sends message to Majors

TORONTO – Federal Communications Minister Marcel Masse put the major American studios on notice that they must do better for Canada in a speech aimed at studio heads in Los Angeles on June 17. But the studio heads weren't there to listen. Millard Roth, executive secretary of the Canadian Motion Picture Distributors Association, the Canadian lobby group for the majors, told Cinema Canada that studio executives invited to a private luncheon were not informed that the minister would be present. Roth said that "there was not a large representation of our member companies there."

David Silcox, assistant deputy minister in the department of Communications, told Cinema Canada that Hollywood had ample warning. "His trip was confirmed two weeks before," Silcox said. He added that nonetheless "attendance was disappointing." He agreed that none of the studio heads had attended. He named the president of distribution for Universal and the heads of distribution and production for Disney as among the most senior guests at the luncheon.

Martin Bockner, general manager of New World/Mutual Pictures, told Cinema Canada that it didn't matter who was present as long as the message was delivered and got through which he believed it had.

In his speech Masse expressed concern over the inadequate commercial distribution of Canadian films "even in our own country because historically Canada has been treated as part of a single North American market." He added that "for their part Canadian film distributors have not had the opportunity to distribute films produced in other countries or even the most commercially

attractive Canadian films. This situation is of increasing concern to the Canadian people."

In his speech Masse took pains to note that the Canadian government was responding positively to American representations about copyright. He made it clear that he expected a reciprocal response to Canadian concerns. (The Majors have been lobbying for royalty rights on cable retransmission of their product. The issue was raised in discussions between President Reagan and Prime Minister Mulroney at the Shamrock Conference last March.)

Masse went on to express his frustration that negotiations had been ongoing with the Majors since January with "no practical results whatsoever." He added that "all negotiations must someday come to an end. I am obliged to report back to my cabinet colleagues early in the fall on the results of our discussions. We will at that point have to consider our options."

Masse made it clear that the stakes were rather high. In a brief historical review he noted that since the 1920s "American film and television productions have pervaded Canadian screens. There have been no levies, as have existed for example in Britain and France; there have been no screen quotas, discriminatory taxes or local work requirements. Between the United States and Canada there has flourished a virtual free trade in theatrical films." The result has been that in 1984 "productions distributed by the Majors earned over 80% of the theatrical box office receipts in Canada, about \$400 million. But the screentime devoted to Canadian films held steady at less than 2%" at a time when Cana-

dians were producing "from 30 to 80 feature films a year. But how many Canadians and Americans have seen them? For example, in 1984 only one Canadian film was released by a Major."

Masse pointed out to his audience that American films cannot supply a Canadian identity. "Only Canadians can do that." He told an anecdote of Cecil B. De Mille's "Canadian" film with its American cast, American writer, American assistants, American technicians and American crew. "Then they prepared to embark for Canada. That kind of film is, of course, not recognizable as Canadian."

Masse said the days of the open market are now passed. "Canadians believe that we must support our own domestic production and distribution industries."

Masse threatened the Majors with options which included legislated limits to the cultural activities of foreigners in Canada: quotas, levies or taxes; or legislation, similar to Quebec's Bill 109 to regulate distribution.

Masse noted that while the Canadian government has been generally supportive of open trade with the States, cultural industries were specifically exempted from the liberalization of the foreign Investment Review Agency (FIRA) in its transformation to Investment Canada.

Whether government action will support cultural protection remains to be seen as decisions are awaited on Gulf & Western's takeover of Prentice-Hall and Rupert Murdoch's acquisition of 20th Century-Fox. In both cases the government must decide whether the takeovers will include the Canadian subsidiaries.

Reactions to appointment

TORONTO – The Ontario production industry has reacted positively to the announcement that Peter Pearson, former director of the Broadcast Fund, has been named executive director of Telefilm Canada, the federal government's film agency. Victor Solnicki, chairman of the Canadian Film and Television Association's Telefilm committee, said "it's wonderful news. Peter has had the support of a great many of us in the industry. I'm extremely pleased. He did a wonderful job as head of the Broadcast Fund. We'll have the continuity we've been seeking."

Michael MacMillan of Atlantis Films said he was "very pleased" He added that Pearson will be faced with tough decisions as a result of the rapid deletion of Telefilm's 1985-86 production allocation.

Stephen Ellis, immediate past-president of the CFTA, felt "that Peter is best qualified for the job." Pat Ferns of Primedia, was "delighted at the appointment." He said that Pearson will provide the leadership Telefilm needs.

Iain Patterson, president of the Association of Canadian Film and Television Producers, said he was very pleased because "Peter knows the ropes and won't require a six-month breaking in period."

Peter Mortimer, executive vice president of the ACFTP, released the following statement to Cinema Canada.

"Peter Pearson has always been very committed to the development of the Canadian production industry. This commitment has taken a variety of incarnations, president of the Directors Guild of Canada, spokesman for the Council of Canadian Filmmakers, a principle in the Per-

formance pay-TV application, and, most recently, as director of the Broadcast Fund. In addition he has had a distinguished career as a director both inside and outside the CBC. He has now been appointed to possibly the most influential position in the country to shape and build the future of our industry.

"Peter has always been energetic and outspoken as well as being possessed of the courage of his own convictions. This was evident in his recent abrupt resignation from Telefilm to identify his candidacy for the executive director's position. That energy and commitment are important assets in what has to be one of the most difficult and often thankless jobs in the industry.

"I have great confidence that Peter will now bring his considerable energies and experience to bear on the job at hand – no one is more familiar with the critical 2 1/2-year timetable which presently faces our industry. I also believe that Peter recognizes fully the vital importance of full consultation with independent producers, the entrepreneurs who drive the industry, in developing new policies and strategies for Telefilm. In a true climate of consultation before the fact the ACFTP, and its Quebec affiliate, the AFPQ, will be ready and willing to work enthusiastically with Peter in building better prospects and opportunities for our industry. He's to be congratulated on his appointment."

MONTREAL – The reaction of those Quebec producers reached by Cinema Canada towards the appointment of Peter Pearson as head of Tele-

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Reactions to Minister's speech

TORONTO – Response to Communications Minister Marcel Masse's Hollywood speech has been mixed. Peter Mortimer, executive secretary of the Association of Canadian Film and Television Producers, is cautious about a protectionist speech in a government which has a predominantly open-door policy.

Millard Roth, executive secretary of the Canadian Motion Picture Distributors Association, the Majors' lobby group, objected to Masse's veiled threat to withhold copyright revisions. He said that "Canada has a responsibility to itself as a country that wants to stand tall in the community of nations." He also disagreed with Masse's analysis of the situation.

"In terms of distribution of films in the U.S. our performance," said Roth, "can stand on its own. It exceeds our undertakings and the ambitions of previous ministers." He quoted figures indicating that in 1976 the Majors released four out of nine Canadian films distributed in the U.S., 1/9 in 1977, 2/8 in 1978, 7/14 in 1979, 18/22 in 1980, 9/25 in 1981, 5/13 in 1982, 3/6 in 1983, 4/5 in 1984. In his speech Masse said that the Majors distributed only one Canadian film in 1984.

Roth added that contrary to what Masse was saying there was not an adequate flow of Canadian theatrical productions. "Production activity goes

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CTV builds Canadian content on Hollywood writers, U.K. stories

TORONTO — CTV announced June 21 that it has entered into a coproduction deal with Taffner & Associates to produce 22 episodes of a half-hour sitcom series, *Check It Out*, set in a supermarket. The series, budgeted at \$175,000-\$220,000 per episode, will star American Don Adams of *Get Smart* fame. It will use the talents of Canadian writers brought up from Hollywood. Producing the show is ACTRA award-winner Stuart Gillard. The series will be produced at Glen Warren studios in Toronto with shooting scheduled to begin July 19.

Arthur Weinthal, vice-president and director of Entertainment Programming for CTV, said at the press launch that "co-productions are crucially important for us to produce programs for our audience." He noted that "the only thing that makes us successful is the quality of our Canadian programming which is the only

thing exclusive to us." He said that CTV faces the problem that "60% of our seats are facing the back of the house. We have to get more money into the country to make programs. This project is a perfect example of how to do it in Canada. The difference in money is the difference between ho-hum and excellent."

Check It Out is based on Britain's Thames Television's sitcom *Trippler's Day*. The first six episodes are rewrites of the British version.

Check It Out is the first project for Taffner & Associates, a joint-venture formed in 1984 between a Canadian investment group with no production background and diverse holdings and D.L. Taffner Ltd. in the United States. Tony Brown, representing Canadian investors, told Cinema Canada in response to a question about Canadian control that "we are not experts in production and

distribution. The only way we can learn is by working with the ones with experience."

Taffner is known for transferring successful British comedy shows into equally successful American sitcoms such as *Three's Company* and *Too Close For Comfort*. The series will be launched in Canada in September and concurrently on the USA Network in the States. It will be available for U.S. syndication in the spring of 1986 through D.L. Taffner Ltd. Taffner said that they will be seeking Telefilm funding but it will not be a major portion of the budget. Taffner noted that by avoiding the major American networks, he needs three or four sales to make the project viable.

For CTV, *Check It Out* is one in a series of Canadian projects. At a press conference a month earlier on May 21, CTV president Murray Chercover said that he wanted to "correct the

misconception that our dealings with Telefilm were non-existent."

Chercover delivered a historical preamble covering the highlights of CTV's 24 years of operation, adding that since 1979 CTV has devoted \$54 million "solely to Canadian dramatic productions." A special video presentation reminded those gathered of the Canadian content line-up in CTV programming: *Live It Up*, *Worldbeat News*, *W5*, *Canada AM*, *Question Period*, *Thrill of a Lifetime*, *Bizarre*, *Lorne Greene's New Wilderness*, *Snow Job*, and *Littlest Hobo*, as well as the network's involvement in Canadian film productions like *A Man Called Intrepid*, *Magic Planet*, *The Life & Times of Edwin Alonzo Boyd*, *Escape From Iran*, *Why Shoot the Teacher* and *The Terry Fox Story*.

Asserting that "CTV has entered a new phase, the next phase of its evolution" in which programming will have "increased budgets and international standards," Chercover outlined the dramatic productions — financed by \$12 million from Telefilm and \$12 million from CTV — that are slated to air during the 1985-1986 season. These consist of two weekly series, four movies-of-the-week, and four TV mini-series, adding up to \$80 million in combined programming budgets.

The series *Night Heat*, produced by Robert Lantos and Steven Roth of RSL Entertainment, is scheduled for 26 episodes in prime-time beginning this autumn. A \$13 million series which will air on both CTV and CBS-TV, *Night Heat* is "an all-Canadian production" starring Jeff Wincott and Scott Hylands.

The second weekly series, *The Campbells*, dramatizes the life of a Scottish doctor who immigrates to Canada in the 1830s. Running for 24 episodes, the series was made with Scottish TV on an \$8 million budget.

The four Telefilm-financed mini-series are *Peter Ustinov's Russia*, a six-hour series produced by John McGreevy of Pushkin Productions; *Mountain Men*, a series on mountain climbers jointly produced by Wendy Wacko Productions and the BBC, and two six-part Canada-France coproductions by Denis Héroux and John Kemeny of ICC, *Louisiana*, starring Margot Kidder and Ian Charleson, and *Blood of Others*, starring Jody Foster.

The four Telefilm-financed movies-of-the-week to be aired on CTV prime-time include *The Bay Boy*, *The Guardian*, *Fun Park* and one other feature to be announced.

Putting to rest any rumours

that CTV is not involved in Telefilm, Chercover stated that "What we're seeing in the fall of 1985 is the specific reaction to the 1983 announcement of the Telefilm Broadcast Fund." He mentioned the network's "on-going and increasing involvement with independent producers." When asked to explain his claim that CTV has "entered a new phase," Chercover answered that "it's the first year that Lantos and Roth (RSL Entertainment) have gotten themselves into series production. That's significant to us. We have brought them into series TV." Elaborating, he said "it's new for us because up to now there has been no guarantee of U.S. exposure."

The video presentation mentioned several CTV projects in development, including two features to be produced by Dick Nielsen and Pat Ferns: a dramatized life of Grey Owl, and the story of Burmese, the Canadian horse given to the Queen as a gift. Robert Cooper Productions is developing several features with CTV, among them a film on the life of Simon Wiesenthal, the hunter of Nazi war criminals. Chercover also affirmed that CTV will be participating in Telefilm's new clause regarding documentary funding, with "six development projects in that category."

Other productions on the agenda include Marie-Josée Raymond's *Riders of the Plain*, a sitcom produced by New York based Don Taffner and Associates, and a movie based on George Jonas' book *Vengeance*.

Chercover also announced that CTV has altered the basis for its advertising rates, introducing a new rate card, or "value card," which offers four different rates for foreign programming in primetime, and a similar range for Canadian programming in primetime. The change reflects the varying popularity of programs in both categories.

Although the press conference was not called to highlight CTV's fall line-up of American shows, Chercover briefly stated that both *V* and *Matt Houston* are gone from the schedule, while a new action-adventure series entitled *MacGyver* has been added. Returning U.S. series include *Crazy Like a Fox*, *The Scarecrow* and *Mrs. King, Rip-Tide*, *The Bill Cosby Show*, *Family Ties* and *Simon & Simon*. Sources indicate that CTV's fall line-up also includes eleven other U.S. series not mentioned by Chercover: *The A-Team*, *Highway to Heaven*, *Hotel*, *Fall Guy*, *Magnum P.I.*, *Cheers*, *Night Court*, *Knight Rider*, *Miami Vice*, *Airwolf* and *Gimme A Break*.

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No confirmation of RSL/ICC merger

TORONTO - Robert Lantos, head of RSL, would not confirm rumours that RSL and ICC, two of Canada's leading production companies, are about to merge. He told Cinema Canada that "the companies have been working very closely together for the past year. Where it's going to go I can't say." He added that their "basic consideration is that we all have come to realize that we are committed for life to the Canadian film and television industry. Hence it is imperative to establish a situation where we can function on a year-round, long-term basis rather than on a boutique basis."

Producers have argued in the past that production companies rather than individual film or television product should be the focus of government and investment support. Lantos noted that a production company with a stable investment base could afford to invest in development and

diversify risk over a range of products. He suggested that Canada has room for no more than 15 major production companies.

RSL recently produced *Joshua Then and Now* which at \$11 million is Canada's most expensive film. Although such budgets are not major by American standards they are a strain on Canadian resources. A larger production company, such as a merged RSL-ICC, could better handle the financial burden of such productions.

Joshua recently had its world premiere at the Cannes film festival where Lantos said audience reaction was "beyond our wildest dream." He said that "no more than one film gets that kind of reaction" at each festival. As a result the film's distributor, 20th Century-Fox, is "now totally behind the film," said Lantos.

The film will have its North American premiere at Toronto's

Festival of Festivals and will open theatrically September 6.

RSL's other film at Cannes, *Night Magic*, received a lukewarm response which Lantos attributed to a midnight screening. He pointed out that French reaction to the film was unanimously positive; English negative. The film sold at Cannes in seven or eight territories including Spain, Portugal, Italy, Denmark and Germany. Spectafilm, North American distributors of the film, plan to release it in French Canada in September and the following month in the States.

Lount in active post-production

TORONTO - Post-production is to resume on *Samuel Lount* on July 8 after being held up by financial difficulties. The film, the story of a pacifist who was hanged for treason for his part in the Canadian rebellion of 1837, is produced by Moonshine Productions of Vancouver with executive producers Don Haig and Laurence Keene and producer Elvira Lount, a great-great-grandniece of Samuel Lount.

Lount ran over budget last February at which time Film House seized the negative pending resolution of the film's financial difficulties. While grateful that she is now being given a chance to complete the film, Lount told Cinema Canada that the protracted negotiations with completion guarantors, Motion Picture Guarantors, has cost her an additional \$20,000 in legal and other costs. Agreement with MPG was finally reached in the first week of July, she said. MPG, according to Lount, will be committing an extra \$25,000 to the project for post-production expenses. They will also reimburse Moonshine a \$29,000 no-claim bonus. Lount said that the bonus had been given in trust to MPG to cover additional expenses as they arose. Lount said that MPG had

been paid \$18,000 to guarantee the picture.

Cinema Canada tried to reach MPG for confirmation of the above but was unsuccessful.

The film is approximately \$80,000 over its original budget of \$1.67 million. Lount is currently seeking additional assistance from the film's co-sponsors CBC and Telefilm. She would like Telefilm to forgive interest on its loan. Lount noted that many of the problems had arisen because the original legal work had not been done properly. But she is also bitter that "filmmaking gets lost in the shuffle of film politics." She said that "if we hadn't fought to keep the film, the film would have been really botched up."

Samuel Lount will premiere in Fredericton, where it was shot, in late September and will be televised by the CBC sometime in 1986.

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VANCOUVER VISTAS

by Rona Gilbertson

The Telefilm Canada arm in Los Angeles - in the persons of director Lorraine B. Good and liaison officer Sam Wendel, met recently in Vancouver with independant producers, writers and various organizational bodies of the film industry.

The main thrust of discussion focused on offering information on how they work south of the border, as the 'eyes and ears' of Canadian filmmakers. Changing from the original NFB-sponsored Film Canada Center to Telefilm means the L.A. office is now able to reach further into an international market. While sharing regular Telefilm labors such as providing reader's reports on scripts, Telefilm L.A. has merged into the infrastructure there, finding funding potential, reading present trends for potential script topics, accessing channels of production and distribution, and securing casting elements. Comingling with the workings of the U.S. market, Telefilm has managed to expand its distribution mandate by reaching into European markets with Canadian productions.

Sam Wendel comes out Los Angeles production, where he has been both independant producer and creative director for Norman Lear Productions. His expertise is in market analysis and recognition of potential and pitfalls. At the Vancouver meeting, Wendel stressed the need for an equal balance of realism and persistence. His best advice was that emphasis be given to a strong script. He reassured audiences that though the life and death of projects is rapid in that milieu, a good idea was bound to surface and, someday, come through. He said in the endless adult game of musical chairs, producers change allegiances to different studios often, and "a promotion comes with a good idea, so these guys do remember."

In Canada, literary agents are few, while in L.A. it is the agent who stays with a project throughout that gets the benefits. It is Telefilm's interest to access more of these agents to guide producers, and reduce the exploratory experience.

Reading the latest trends, Good said that there are development dollars available in Los Angeles. The independent syndication market, for example, is becoming more and more lucrative. Previously all production was bought pre-packaged from networks. The appearance of pay-TV has changed that, leaving syndicators short of money and long on inexperience. They are willing to come in on some co-production possibilities, leaning

on the expertise of others. This is just the situation in which the Canadian filmmaker can initially move. Metromedia was cited as a good example: with their new prime-time license, they are ready to discuss access to good, network movie programming.

As for marketing Canadian productions, Telefilm said that these lower-budget works may be packaged with more recognized titles as conglomerate bundles are more saleable than single items.

Without a good-track record (which both L.A. representatives urged should be developed when possible within Canadian borders), studio payments on options are oftentimes minuscule, contracts are never re-

liable insurance and the project could expire at any stage. But, more and more recently, a change is making itself apparent.

Canadians have felt that impact with such productions as *Joshua Then And Now*, with the support of 20th Century Fox, *Father Christmas* with Phil Borsos at the helm and producer Peter O'Brian acting with the Disney team, Pieter Kroonenburg and Jamie

Brown's *Toby McTeague* in collaboration with Spectrafilm and Paul Saltzman's *Danger Bay*, made with a troika of Disney Channel, CBC and Telefilm Canada.

The key to theatrical successes with the smaller budgeted production is often to engage a producer's representative, who will exceed the task of agents by tracking and pro-



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photo: Bertrand Carrière

ANNE TRISTER IN POST-PRODUCTION

Anne Trister, Léa Pool's latest film, is now in post-production. This new feature film, following Pool's highly successful *La Femme de l'hôtel*, is a co-production of the National Film Board and Les Films Vision 4 Inc., and stars Albane Guilhe in the title role; Louise Marleau, Kim Yarochevskaya, Hughes Quester and Guy Thauvette. Based on an original screenplay by Marcel Beaulieu and Léa Pool, the story is about a 25-year-old Jewish woman who leaves her native Switzerland after the death of her father and comes to live in Québec. To deal with her grief, she throws herself into a love affair and an extravagant, insane painting project. *Anne Trister* was filmed in Québec, Switzerland and Israel with Pierre Mignot, the director of photography. Now in the editing rooms of the National Film Board, the film is scheduled for release in the spring of 1986.

CROP POLL ON NATIONAL FILM BOARD

Results of a recent CROP survey reveal that the National Film Board is a well-known cultural institution and that over half of the Canadian adult population have seen an NFB production in the past year.

The CROP survey, based on 2,044 in-home interviews, between April 22 and May 14, 1985, was commissioned by the Film Board's Program Evaluation office. The data will be used as part of the Canadian marketing and distribution study which is currently underway.



Louise Marleau and Albane Guilhe in scene from Léa Pool's forthcoming feature: *Anne Trister*.

Highlights of responses to the 13-question survey indicate that 52% of Canada's adult population have seen a National Film Board film in the past 12 months and nine out of ten were satisfied with what they saw. Furthermore, eight out of ten adult Canadians have, at sometimes, seen an NFB film; four out of ten knew they could arrange to see Film Board films or videos through public or NFB libraries; and eight out of ten thought the Film Board provided valuable products and services to Canadians in general. However, seven out of ten people who had heard of the NFB indicated they do not consider themselves well informed about the products and services of the Film Board.

The new institutional goals at the National Film Board are designed to improve and modernize product information about NFB films. Arrangements with public and community institutions to establish film/video centres, such as the recent agreements with La Biblio-

thèque de Québec in Québec City and the public library in Chicoutimi are concrete examples of how the NFB will increase its network and will establish more dynamic communication with the public.

UP-COMING TELECAST

Speaking Our Peace, a one-hour documentary exploring the global questions of war and peace and the nuclear arms race from the perspective of women, will be telecast Tuesday, August 6, at 8:00 p.m. on CBC. Co-directed by Bonnie Sherr Klein and Terri Nash, *Speaking Our Peace* presents the passionate points of view of women who have committed their lives to attaining permanent world peace. The film was shot in Canada, Britain and USSR and was produced by the Film Board's Women's Studio. Significantly, the August 6 telecast date coincides with the 40th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima.

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moting projects through any amount of festivals for the producer. This is known, in common parlance as, "special handling." It makes the difference in a marketplace that assumes the character of a vacuum for whatever isn't tied down. While submitting in international markets with the Festivals Bureau, Telefilm is

building contacts with producers' representatives.

In response to questions about television marketability, Wendel and Good spoke of the syndicators who have risen like phoenixes from the ashes of pay-TV. As the 'repetition factor' almost killed pay, the competitive edge today is hungry for fresh works. However, the pay-TV that previously paid \$100,000-400,000 for licensing fees, now offers minis-

cule sums and no strong marketplace for much other than good mini-series.

Home video is now the great prize, while ironically presenting a great dilemma to filmmakers. Telefilm urges a good research plan before leaping, for the lure of up to 50% buy-in spells danger. The attractive offer also dictates that a large amount of royalties from cassette sales be signed over, often world rights, theatrical rights,

product rights, while with maximized performance, the production's worth rises with each market. The price should be built-in to recognize this escalation clause, initially.

Lastly, Good and Wendel offered insight into how to gain greater favorability with Telefilm. Since the days of the 100% tax shelters, greater weight is now being given those who do their homework. Now, as a sign of good faith from players in

the field, Telefilm demands letters of support, not necessarily financial commitment, but proffering encouragement and enthusiasm, in the initial stages of bargaining.

The general feeling, as a 'wrap' was declared on the meeting, was that contrary to many beliefs within the Canadian film community, with Telefilm assistance, the game's a whole lot easier on our side of the border.

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Bob Vince

Jacque Ross

Beryl Fox

Doug Leiterman

Pearson appointed

cont. from p. 43

"The film financing system does not work. Thirteen major features were produced in English Canada in 1972. Six in 1973. Only one in 1974 (to date).

"The film distribution system does not work. In 1972 less than 2% of the movies shown in Ontario were Canadian, less than 5% in Quebec - the supposed bedrock of Canadian cinema.

"The film exhibition system does not work. The foreign-dominated theatre industry, grossing over \$140 million at the box office in 1972, is recycling only nickels and dimes into future domestic production.

"Clearly something is wrong.

"It is no wonder then that the Canadian Film Development Corporation cannot possibly work and neither can we."

When the government failed to move on distribution Pearson called the voluntary quota then in place "tokenism" and stated, "I think it's all fiction and the generation that has fought since 1968 to make a film industry is basically lost. Every country in the world has solved this problem... It's a political problem."

In the last five years, Pearson has had a strong sense of purpose. He told Cinema Canada then that he felt his generation of filmmakers had been given their chance, and that it was time they move on and assume leadership positions within the industry to try, yet again, to create that vital industry which had yet to be realized. His feeling was that if they had not already made their marks as filmmakers it was less interesting to keep plugging away than to enter the government agencies which, in Canada, are ultimately responsible for the state of filmmaking. Shortly after that conversation, Pearson was named to head the Broadcast Fund. With this recent appointment, Pearson now has a major role to play in the shaping of Canadian film and television policy.

As readers of Cinema Canada know, Pearson's film credits include *The Best Damn Fiddler from Calabogie to Kaladar* which won eight Canadian Film Awards, *Paperback Hero*, many CBC programs including *Insurance Man from Ingersoll* and

cont. on p. 50

SHOOT ALBERTA

by Linda Kupecek

Shout "action" in Alberta this summer, with (finally) a flurry of location shooting, as well as a number of Alberta-based productions on the go.

Alberta has been rediscovered as a location site, with *Rad*, a teenage adventure set in the world of BMX bicycle racing, on the track August 15 in Bowness, a suburb of Calgary. Hal Needham (*Cannonball Run*) will helm the seven-week shoot.

Loyalties, \$2.7 million feature for Lauron Productions Ltd. (Toronto) and Wheeler-Hendren Enterprises Ltd. (Edmonton) with a July start in Lac la Biche, is funded by the Alberta Motion Picture Development Corporation (AMPDC) Telefilm and private investors.

The television series, *The Little Vampire*, also funded by

the AMPDC (with Polyphon, Primedia and CITV) is also in production in Edmonton. Director is René Bonnière, and associate producer is Patricia Mahon for Norflicks Productions Ltd.

Striker's Mountain completed principal photography May 14, ahead of schedule and on its \$2.3 million budget, according to producer Wendy Wacko. The two-hour feature was directed by Alan Simmonds on location in Jasper and the Caribou Mountains, with leading players Leslie Nielsen, Bruce Greenwood, Mimi Kuzyk and Tom Peacocke.

Other projects (in varying stages of production) added to the AMPDC lineup are: *Shooting Stars: the Story of an Amazing Basketball Team*, a \$325,000 one-hour docudrama

produced by Allan Stein (completed); *Hail Alley*, a \$1.8 million adventure TV feature about a weather research station, to be produced by Peter Campbell of the Dreamland Picture Company in Edmonton, and written by Michael Mercer; *Connecting*, a nine-episode videotaped television series for young adults, produced by HBW/Toth Co-productions of Calgary (completed); *Wildcat*, a half-hour television pilot, a Tinsel Media and Atlantis Film Ltd. co-production (completed); *Whispering Willow*, a \$1.5 million TV movie mixing kung fu and computers in Vancouver, to be produced by Bradshaw MacLeod and Associates of Calgary; *Escape*, a \$700,000 feature to be produced by Montesi and Haynes of Trapped Productions (the team that swooped through with *Birds of Prey*); *Who Killed Sir Harry Oakes?* a mini-series co-production of Great Oaks Productions Limited (England) and

the King Motion Picture Corporation (Edmonton); *Riders of the Plains*, a \$4 million mini-series from the team of Marie-Josée Raymond, Michelle Stirling and Claude Fournier; *By Special Appointment*, a television feature about Burmese, the lead horse of the RCMP Musical Ride, now the ceremonial mount of Queen Elizabeth II, to be produced by Pat Ferns and Judith Crawley, written by W.O. Mitchell; and *The Dream Horses*, a \$7.5 million romance adventure to be produced by Ronald Cohen, written by Harvey Spaak and Allan Stein.

Dramalab, a three-phase program for young producers, directors and writers with the sponsorship of the National Film Board, Telefilm Canada, and the Department of Communications, is underway in Edmonton and Montreal under the leadership of Allan King.

Seven teams from across the country worked creatively in a workshop situation in phase one (Alberta) with a discussion piece to follow in Montreal (phase two). Tom Radford is executive producer of Dramalab... CBC reports its local evening newscasts are drawing a quarter of a million viewers in Alberta, with the children's program, *Switchback*, produced in Calgary drawing a provincial audience of 85,000... Fred Keating, host/writer of *Mailbag*, aired nationally on First Choice/Superchannel on a daily basis, has departed his post at Alberta Culture to freelance with his new company, Lindisfarne Productions... Thunder Road Studios in Calgary, in receivership for two years, has closed its doors and put its equipment up for tender, leaving Smooth Rock Studios as the remaining 24-track facility... The Independent Motion Picture Association of Calgary (IMPAC) is sponsoring "Personal Computers in the Film and Video Industry", a workshop given by specialist Mary McGuire...

Border scenes: A crew from NFB Studio D landed in Regina in May to shoot a documentary on disabled women and employment, helmed by Anne Henderson, with a.d./researcher Margot Ouimet, cameraman Carlos Ferrand, soundperson Esther Auger, camera assistant Nastaron Dibai and electrician Normand Lecuyer... The Golden Sheaf Awards, North America's oldest continuous short film festival, is gearing up for 1985, with deadline for entries September 30. A treasure in the middle of Saskatchewan, full of good short films and good never-ending fun, the Golden Sheaf Awards are slated for October 30 to November 3.

Pearson appointed

cont. from p. 49

The Tar Sands; he also co-authored the screenplays for *One Man* which won a Canadian Film Award, *Insurance Man* and *Snowbird*, the latter with Margaret Atwood.

Pearson said of himself in 1973, "I'm sort of the Mike Marshall of Canadian movies. I took over from Al Waxman on my current film (*Only God Knows*) and of course Peter Carter on *Paperback Hero*. Mike Marshall is the relief pitcher for the Montreal Expos who always comes in and saves the Expo's baseball games."

So Mike, a.k.a. Peter Pearson, is on the mound again. This is one game which deserves to be won.

Pearson is married to Suzanne Vachon, is the father of Louis-Charles de Beauce Vachon-Pearson, and is 47 years old. The family is expected to move to Montreal, where Telefilm Canada has its head office, shortly.

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Drabinsky talks business

TORONTO - The Toronto business community lapped up harsh criticism tossed at it by Garth Drabinsky, chief executive officer of Cineplex Odeon Corporation. Speaking to a sell-out crowd at a Board of Trade breakfast on June 6, the last and most popular in a series of Board of Trade breakfast talks, Drabinsky noted that entrepreneurs are "the victims of Canadian pessimism. We have driven many of our successful people outside of Canada." He cited his own case as a typical example of a battler against pessimists. "As Cineplex seemed on the brink of disaster, everybody gloated. Suddenly, when the stock is on the rise I receive the encouraging comments which would have done a lot to give me heart."

Again and again Drabinsky returned to his theme of an unimaginative business community dominated by "skeptics and prognosticators of doom." He said that the initial reaction to his Cineplex idea was, "It's a mad, new idea which will never work. It has never been tried before because it never would work." It was Drabinsky's turn to gloat as he told the audience that "the public had liked the Eaton Centre from the start." His only problem had been being locked out of competing for first-run films. He briefly recapitulated his struggle

to introduce bidding and the dramatic effects it had on Cineplex's fortunes culminating in the spectacular Odeon takeover last year.

Drabinsky said that Cineplex Odeon is now the fifth largest chain in North America. The future for the corporation holds new experiments including on-screen advertising. He noted that "we are being inundated by corporate sponsors. This form will contribute to our revenues." He projected a 600-screen chain in two years with American outlets in New York, Chicago and southern California where Cineplex already owns the Beverly Center. Drabinsky added that he does not intend to go national in the States. "That would kill me."

Drabinsky closed his talk with an impassioned plea that the "influence pedlars will at least allow entrepreneurs a period of grace, free from pessimism and premature judgments. Entrepreneurs are already out on a very long limb. They don't need a chain saw in the hands of every observer."

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Reaction to Pearson

cont. from p. 43

film Canada ranged from pleasure to indifference.

"Pearson is a very good choice," Pierre Valcour of Cine-Mundo Inc. told Cinema Canada. "He is a man with experience. At one of the most important periods for producers Lamy was fired as head of Telefilm and Pearson resigned as director of Telefilm's broadcast fund leaving many independent producers a little worried about what to expect. The selection of Pearson, however, assures a certain continuity in the direction which Telefilm had previously undertaken. I believe he will be an asset to the film industry and will encourage production as much as possible."

Bernadette Payeur of the Association Coopérative de Productions Audio-Visuelle (ACPAV) was less enthusiastic about the recent appointment. "I do not really know Pearson very well," Payeur told Cinema Canada, "but I would have preferred to have maintained the continuity in the role of Telefilm with André Lamy. Either way I don't think it is really going to change things too drastically."

Several of Quebec's producers considered the appointment as a political move on the part of Communications Minister Marcel Masse. Robert Baylis of Canadian International Studios Inc. told Cinema Canada, "The appointment of Pearson is a good one. He is a good man with a great many years of experience in the Canadian production industry. But what is really important is whether Pearson will simply be a pawn in Marcel Masse's plans. The entire political platform of Telefilm has to be clearly defined because, the way it is going now, independent producers will be unable to carry the financial burden of production. There has to be a long term political commitment on the part of Telefilm on issues such as coproductions and its involvement in the cinema and television industry. As an individual, Pearson is perhaps the most experienced for the job but what will be important is the political strategy of Marcel Masse."

While agreeing on the politics involved in the appointment of Pearson as head of Telefilm, some producers were a little more optimistic about the role he will be playing in the Canadian production industry. "It is an excellent nomination," Joseph Beaubien of Videoglobe told Cinema Canada, "He is a man of great experience and I have known him long enough to know that he is a great politician. He will definitely be a positive force in the industry and for Telefilm."

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Young Canada Television/Télé-jeunesse Canada is a non-profit corporation which has recently filed an application with the CRTC to operate a national television service offering English and French Programming channels designed for Canada's children and youth. This new service will be offered to all Canadian cable distributors for carriage on their basic or extended basic services. Subject to the conditions outlined in the application, Young Canada Television/Télé-jeunesse Canada will commence broadcasting in September 1986 and the positions offered will be effective towards the end of 1985.

The **Director General** will be responsible for planning, directing and coordinating all operations of Young Canada Television/Télé-jeunesse Canada. The person selected, in addition to having demonstrated leadership qualities and being bilingual, will possess a solid managerial background, more specifically in financial management, in the field of broadcasting or communications.

The **Directors of Programming** will be responsible for establishing programming responding to the needs of target audiences as identified by the Board of Directors and the Regional Advisory Councils, among others. In this capacity they will coordinate the production of programs which will be contracted to Canadian independent producers, and will also coordinate the acquisitions program. The persons selected will have a number of years experience in a related position; they will have a thorough knowledge of Canadian audio visual production and will possess appropriate personal qualities.

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Please forward your curriculum vitae, by August 30, 1985 at the latest, to:
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Télé-jeunesse Canada/Young Canada Television, une corporation à but non-lucratif, a récemment déposé une demande auprès du CRTC en vue d'obtenir une licence d'exploitation d'un réseau national de télévision avec une programmation en français et en anglais destiné aux enfants et à la jeunesse canadienne. Ce nouveau service sera offert à tous les cablodistributeurs canadiens pour diffusion à même le service de base ou le service de base élargi. Sous réserve des conditions énoncées dans la demande, Télé-jeunesse Canada/Young Canada Television entrera en ondes en septembre 1986 et les postes offerts débiteront vers la fin de l'année 1985.

Le **Directeur général** devra planifier, diriger et coordonner l'ensemble des activités de fonctionnement de Télé-jeunesse Canada/Young Canada Television. La personne recherchée, en plus d'offrir des qualités évidentes de leadership et d'être bilingue, possèdera une solide expérience de gestion, plus spécifiquement du côté financier, dans le domaine de la télé-diffusion ou des communications.

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Montreal market garners 30-plus countries

MONTREAL - Confirmation of participation in the 1985 Montreal Film, Television and Video Market have come in from buyers and sellers from over 30 countries.

Held August 25-31, the Market is an important and integral facet of the ninth World Film Festival being held in Montreal from August 21 to September 1.

"For the international buyers, sellers and distributors the Montreal market has been steadily increasing in importance," market director Jackie Dinsmore told Cinema Canada. "This is, of course, due to the great success of the World Film Festival itself. The two really go hand in hand. The Market brings in the professional people who are attracted to Montreal by the festival itself. The fact that the reputation of the festival as well as that of the market have grown steadily over the last few years also means that the quality of the products being presented are better since we now have a larger field to choose from."

Among the major buyers who will be occupying offices at the festival and market headquarters at the Meridien Hotel, are England's Film Four International and Goldcrest Films & TV Ltd., Orion Classics, Home Box Office, Showtime/

The Movie Channel, Vestron Video, Spectrafilm and Inflight Services Inc. from the States; France will be represented by Omnifilms and Télé Luxembourg Film.

Other countries which will be represented in Montreal are West Germany, Yugoslavia, Brazil, China, Russia, Japan, Venezuela and a host of others. As well, Greece and Nigeria will be sending representatives for the first time.

There will be an equally large congregation of sellers on hand, led by representatives of seven New-York-based sales agents who will participate in the market as part of a unified "New York Delegation"

"The reason that the New York representatives have joined to form a unified delegation is that this is the first time they are attending the Montreal Market," Dinsmore explained. "It is sort of a trial run for them. Many of their companies want to attend the Market but are not necessarily interested in carrying the financial burden of getting their own office. They decided to come together. This, however, does not mean that they will be representing one another. They will simply be sharing the office costs. After they see the advantages of the Montreal market," con-

tinued Dinsmore, "they may get their own offices in future years."

The seven New York sales agencies who form the delegation are Almi Pictures, Films Around The World, Interpictures, Robert Myers International, Silverstein International, Quartet Pictures and Kino International Corporation.

Scandinavia will have a strong representation in both buying and selling with the Finnish Film Foundation, Sverges Television-Channel 1 from Sweden, The Finnish Broadcasting Corporation and the Danish Film Institute all attending the market.

For the first time, Cuba will also be represented by the Instituto Cubano Del Arte Cinematografico which has requested a video screening room of its own for the duration of the market in order to screen the large number of films it plans on bringing to Montreal on cassettes.

Canadian representatives, distributors, producers and television networks include Radio-Canada, CBC Enterprises, Les Productions La Fête, Ciné 360, Films Transit, Telefilm Canada, Spectrafilm, Viva-film, Les Productions Rene Malo, First Choice/Superchannel, Astral Films and Columbia

Pictures Television of Canada.

Due to the growing popularity of the market and to the large number of confirmations by film and TV representatives, 12 video rooms will be available, marking an increase of 50 per

cent over last year. As well, screening facilities in both 16 mm and 35 mm will be available at the four theatres of Complexe Desjardins, the same complex which houses the Meridien Hotel.

Macerola defends NFB before Commons committee

MONTREAL - Appearing before the House of Commons standing committee on communications and culture in Ottawa on May 9, government film commissioner and National Film Board chairman François Macerola spoke positively of the NFB's 46 years of filmmaking and outlined the significant role the Board will play in Canada's future.

Macerola emphasized the importance of Canadian film and television productions as powerful cultural agents and the need for increased Canadian content, as well as the capital role the NFB and other public bodies play in attaining this goal. Currently only 3% of films shown in theatres in Canada are made here, said Macerola.

Macerola explained that the NFB is mandated to answer the needs of minority groups,

children and youth, women and people concerned with social change.

To meet the challenges of this mandate, Macerola outlined the new priorities of the Board as being effective programming, production and distribution, improved relations with filmmakers across Canada and research, development and training.

"In order to reach its goals, the NFB," explained Macerola, "is taking steps to reduce its administrative infrastructure, and better manage its resources. Activities not related to those central to our mandate... will be vastly decreased or terminated. It is our objective over the next five years to re-invest up to \$15 million in programming and communication, so that more NFB films are made and seen by Canadians."



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Studio Centre-Ville opens in Montreal

MONTREAL - Two important Montreal-based private-sector production houses, SDA Productions Ltd. and Via Le Monde Productions Inc., have joined forces to open Studio Centre-Ville, a new television studio located in the heart of downtown Montreal.

The new facility, equipped with some of the most up-to-date technology available, was inaugurated June 5 in the presence of Canadian film and television representatives and celebrities, including Patrick Watson and celebrated British actor Peter Ustinov.

The two founding partners of Studio Centre-Ville, SDA president François Champagne, and Via Le Monde president Daniel Bertolino, explained that the initiative came about as a result of independent producers' lack of to existing facilities.

"There are simply no available studios in Montreal for long-term projects such as the *Passe Partout* and *A Plein Temps*, series which we are producing," Champagne told Cinema Canada. "It is not always easy to get the large television networks to make studio time and space available to independent producers," Champagne added, referring to the Télé-métropole facilities. "They are not the most cooperative people to deal with. This

way, we are assured of having the studio time we require."

The opening of Studio Centre-Ville also reflects doubts on the part of the producers involved as to the feasibility of former communications minister Francis Fox's planned Cité Du Cinéma which was to be established in Montreal. "We certainly do not want to get involved in another white elephant like Mirabel Airport," Champagne explains.

"It is a positive thing to establish these type of infrastructures for Montreal's independent producers. We will be making the facilities of Studio Centre Ville available to independent producers, but we will of course be giving priority to long-term contracts," Champagne said.

Outfitted entirely in Dolby sound, complete with a Neotek 16-8-2 console, Otari 1"-8 track and 1/4"-2 track recorders, the new double wireless diversity Sennheiser microphone system as well as three Sony 330 CCCU video cameras, VTR BVH 2000's and BVT 2000, Studio Centre Ville will allow for the production of a wide variety of top-quality programming. Jean-Raymond Bourque, with over 15 years' experience in the technical aspects of audio-visual production, is Studio Centre-Ville's director-general.

Both production houses will

make use of the new facilities in producing their respective television series: SDA, with the weekly half-hour entertainment show *A Plein Temps*, and Via Le Monde with a news-type documentary on the state of the planet, hosted by Peter Ustinov and Patrick Watson, entitled *The World Challenge*.

Tassé starts own production company

MONTREAL - Richard Tassé, an award winning filmmaker from Montreal, has established a new production company called Les productions Nouveau-Concept specializing in video productions.

Tassé's partners in this joint venture are video artist and researcher Denis Lemir, as well as computer and sound specialist François Rouleau.

Reaction to Masse

cont. from p. 43

up and down. It's not in step with what consumers want. The companies are interested in distributing good pictures." Roth said that the department of Communications is looking for a level of commitment in writing from his association which the association finds difficult to accede to. He said that DOC has "not really quantified what their objective is today and five years out."

Martin Bockner, general manager of New World/Mutual Pictures, who for many years has been a leading critic of government's futile attempts to resolve the Canadian distribution crisis, told Cinema Canada that for the first time "maybe there is hope after all." He said that Masse "is the first minister who seems to have an understanding of distribution. That I applaud."

Bockner said that he would like to see Masse follow up "in terms of considered action so that Canadian-owned distribution companies are allowed

expansion in their own marketplace to the point that they can get directly involved in production. That can come about only by government support, support that is not monetary."

When asked if he thought Masse's speech was at odds with the government's general open-door policy towards the United States, Bockner replied that "cultural industries have peculiar problems. The policy of open-door goes along well with most industries but is counterproductive when it comes to cultural industries."

David Silcox, DOC assistant deputy minister, agreed. "It is not a change in government policy. Mr. Masse has made a point that the cultural area has to be developed in Canada. He added that Masse "inherited a consistent trail of broken promises and resolutions. He doesn't want to be seen as the one to fail."

Robert Lantos, head of RSL, fully agreed with Masse's approach but was "totally pessimistic of the government having the stomach to pass that kind of legislation. I would like to be proven wrong," he added.

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ACTRA signs with producers for a general increase and several rollbacks

TORONTO - ACTRA has signed a one-year agreement with the producers' associations. The agreements provide for a 3.5% general increase in ACTRA rates but with rollbacks in two areas. Writers will be paid less for a dramatic series and producers will get a 25% discount on fees for performers contracted for 13 episodes of a series. Sam Jephcott, executive director of the Canadian Film and Television Association, told Cinema Canada that the rollbacks reflected longstanding producers' concerns. He said that series writers have their characters and situations laid out for them, making it easier to write. The discount on performers' fees will make series that much easier to produce as well as providing an incentive for providing greater job security to performers. Other features of the agreement include an increase in

administration fee to producers who are not members of either the CFTA or the Association of Canadian Film and Television Producers and an increase in insurance contribution to 2.5% from 2%. Other changes in the performers' agreement are:

- when a performer plays two roles in the same show, he or she will only get the 50% premium for those days on which both roles are scheduled or performed;
- if a performer is required to attend a fourth or subsequent audition he or she will get \$25 per hour;
- no meal break during a 4-hour recall;
- 2-hour minimum recall for wardrobe prior to shooting days;
- industrials and documentaries will no longer have to pay residuals on foreign distribution for narrators and commentators;

- work permit fees have been increased to \$150 per-week per-program for foreigners;
- the rest period between days for children has been increased to 12 hours;
- royalty payments require a 1% administration fee with a \$50 minimum but one cheque will cover all performers in a program.

Other changes in the writers' agreement are:

- if a film is not produced within seven years, the rights in the script revert unless otherwise contracted;
- the producer may audition a writer who is without credits in that category of production to a limit without a fee.

The agreement runs until March 31, 1986. Meanwhile, the producers are still in negotiations with the Directors Guild over a new contract.

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Scarborough site no threat to Toronto

TORONTO - An attempt by Scarborough to attract the CBC Broadcast Centre away from Toronto is "not an issue," Janet Dey, director of planning and development for the Broadcast Centre Development Project, told Cinema Canada. "We are five to ten years into a 13-year development which has received approval from the board of governors and the federal government." A preliminary report on the project went to the city of Toronto's Land Use committee on June 18.

The report, prepared by city planning commissioner Stephen McLaughlin, generally approved the project but raised questions about density and housing requirements. The Land Use committee requested the CBC consider scaling down its project by about one-third. Dey said that the CBC will look at it but "I don't think there will be much change."

The city also wants CBC to commit to 600 housing units.

However, CBC has said that more than 250 units will put off the private developers it hopes to engage to undertake the massive \$550 million development which will result in office

space, a hotel, housing, a park as well as the Broadcast Centre. The city indicated that it would accept 350 housing units off the development site on CBC-owned property elsewhere in

the downtown core. Those properties would be vacated on completion of the project. Dey said that conveying the land to the city would require the approval of the federal government.

The report noted that the project will generate 3,000 jobs over a four-year period and

wages of over \$300 million. It would be a boost to the city's economic life. Toronto mayor Art Eggleton has often expressed his commitment to the project. If all approvals go ahead construction should start in 1987. A final report on the project goes to the Land Use committee on August 14.

CFTA plans for CanShow market get first approval

TORONTO - The Canadian Film and Television Association confirmed a date and venue for its first export market for film and television programming. Canshow will take place in Ottawa, September 5-8, 1986 sandwiched between the Montreal and Toronto festivals to avoid conflicts. Sam Jephcott, CFTA's executive director, told Cinema Canada that the Department of Communications, External Affairs, Telefilm, the National Film Board and the CBC all "approve the concept." They are waiting for a budget before they commit financial support. The CFTA hopes to raise additional financing through delegate fees and corporate sponsorships.

Jephcott said that 200 buyers will be invited to the four-day market with an expected attendance of 150. Invitations will go only to buyers vetted by a CFTA committee. Jephcott said that it is only interested in serious purchasers. All or part of the buyers' expenses will be picked up by Canshow. Jephcott said that Canshow was an innovative way of marketing Canadian product. He added that it was an indication that the volume of Canadian production had reached significant proportions to make such a market viable.



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Castravelli and Serapilia trust in tax shelter and trained directors

MONTREAL - Proper understanding and application of Canadian tax laws, combined with a knowledge of the film industry can make investing into a film project a no-risk and profitable endeavour, according to Taurus 7 Film Corporation.

This relatively young production company, headed by producers Claude Castravelli and Peter Serapilia, wants to create an instant place for itself in the Canadian production industry with an innovative approach to financing, an interesting mixture of low-budget features by university-trained filmmakers, and rock videos by some of Canada's directors.

Castravelli and Serapilia have gone back, in a dynamic and aggressive manner, to the once fashionable but recently all but ignored tax shelters offered by both the Quebec and federal governments. Considered in the late '70s to be the saviour of the Canadian film

industry, the tax shelter program was discredited in the early '80s when the bottom fell out of the investment market.

"In 1976 the Quebec and federal tax laws changed," Castravelli told Cinema Canada, "But nobody really used them properly. Everybody was investing money into very bad high-budget films. These films, however, were just rip-offs through which many lawyers and accountants figured out ways of making a great deal of money. They did not care at all about the quality or the success of the films. This scared off many potential investors."

In 1980 Castravelli produced and directed a \$180,000 budget film entitled *Les jeunes québécoises*. This film, entirely financed through the tax shelters, made a profit of \$1 million, making it the year's highest grossing film in Quebec.

"I'm a filmmaker first," explained Castravelli, "I want to

make a film that I can be proud of. Those lawyers and accountants did not care about the product at all. The existing tax shelters can be used in a positive way."

Under the Quebec tax laws, investors who put money into eligible Quebec-made films are entitled to a 150 percent deduction from their gross incomes, while the federal government offers a similar deduction of 100 percent spread over a two-year period.

To make Taurus 7's modest tax shelter budgets stretch further, Castravelli has turned to university-trained filmmakers who are young, energetic and brimming with new ideas for films but do not yet have the necessary money or experience to go about making their own feature films.

"The film industry is a very closed market," says Castravelli, "And it is very difficult for the young filmmakers to get the chance to make their own films from their own scripts. These filmmakers are willing to work hard at minimum wages in order to gain the necessary experience and to show what they are capable of."

Castravelli and Serapilia set a precedent by producing 25-year-old Concordia university graduate Doug Harris' first feature film in 35mm. The result was a \$220,000 contemporary comedy entitled *Remembering Mel*, written by Harris and Lary Raskin. The film will be distributed by the American firm LIC International.

"The market for *Remembering Mel*", according to Castravelli, "is the same as the one for *Repo-Man* or *Brother From Another Planet*. Most of the films we will be producing will

have this 'off-track' film audience."

During 1985, Castravelli and Serapilia plan to produce three more features with budgets of up to \$300,000 each. They are appealing to interested young writers and filmmakers to send in synopses and completed scripts, in either French or English, along with a sample of their work.

Under the same tax shelter scheme, Castravelli and Serapilia will produce rock videos for international distribution. These rock videos will offer relatively unknown Canadian musicians an opportunity to break into international markets.

"The nature of the rock video industry is changing," says Castravelli. "Record companies will no longer be giving the rock videos to the television networks as promotional pieces for the artist's songs and albums. They will soon be selling the rock videos as a product in themselves. As a matter of fact, CBC has announced that they will be charging licensing fees for their videos."

"What is going to be important in the future is to actually own the rock videos which are aired on television," continued Castravelli, "And I want to be in the forefront of this new development in the video in-

dustry."

Castravelli and Serapilia have succeeded in finding financial backers, within the tax shelter scheme, for 18 rock videos which are to be produced over the next six months. They have made arrangements with the MuchMusic pay-TV network to air most of Taurus 7's videos and negotiations are currently under way to reach similar agreements with MTV in the States and with European networks.

"What we want to do," explains Castravelli, "is to produce and finance rock videos for the record companies and, in return, share in the profits of record sales. Since we would own the videos, we would make the profits from their airing on television."

Castravelli's plans, however, do not end there. Under the capital gains tax laws of the new Conservative budget one could use the tax shelters to start a record company and Castravelli is considering launching his own record label.

By then, Castravelli and Serapilia hope to have established their reputations as producers and will have given new, young and talented artists the opportunity to gain professional experience and exposure.

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SuperEcran wins over Québécois, wants Canadian Content relief

MONTREAL - Like central Canadian and western Canadian pay-TV licensees First Choice and Superchannel recently, Quebec pay licensee Premier Choix: TVEC, better known by its brand-name Super Ecran, will shortly be petitioning the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) for release from 30% Canadian content in primetime.

The difference, though, between deficit-burdened pay-TV in Canada and pay-TV in Quebec is that the French-language movie channel is proving highly successful. "We have a love affair going with our subscribers," Hubert Harel, Super Ecran's ebullient CEO, enthused during a recent interview with Cinema Canada. So much so that this autumn, the French pay web will be going public and by October expects to have wiped out a \$10 million debt inherited from its predecessor.

With a current 92,000 subscribers or 10% penetration rate, Super Ecran will reach an operational break-even point at 110,000, also expected for October, after which, with vigorous marketing, the sky is potentially the limit. Harel cites industry estimates - which he considers optimistic

- that a penetration rate of 50% within five years is not unthinkable.

"The average Quebecer is a fervent consumer of cinema," Harel says. And it is this ravenous appetite for movies that is both at the root of Super Ecran's successful strategy and, ironically, the source of its Canadian content problems.

After a little over a year at Super Ecran's helm, Harel, who swept into his job with a marketing study, has just had enthusiastic confirmation that he must be doing something right: a subscribers' poll via the April program guide produced a response rate of 4% (the norm is .5%) or 3600 respondents (on 90,000 the norm is 500), 89.7% of which rated Super Ecran's programming as excellent (5.2%), very good (22.6%), and good (61.9%). "I've been in marketing for 15 years," Harel says, "and I've never, ever seen anything like this." Comparatively, in the summer '84 phone survey, 30.8% of respondents had rated the web's programming as poor, while in April '85, 7.8% said Super Ecran's programming was poor.

For Harel, the positive response - "They love us!" - derives from re-positioning the

product in the consumer's mind since what he calls pay-TV's "second wave" of October, 1984. First, as a movie channel, thus the name-change to Super Ecran (though Premier Choix: TVEC remains the company name), secondly as a discretionary channel. In Harel's view, the first wave of pay-TV succumbed to ruinous competition for ever-increasing numbers of new titles on the one hand, and too high a repetition factor on the other. Super Ecran, which Harel notes repeats titles between two-five times a month, has kept what he calls "a commercial promise" to its subscribers in offering a minimum of 20 new titles each month. "But unlike election promises that immediately go by the boards, we kept our minimum, and increased it with 21 new titles last November, 24 in May, 27 in July and 29 for July."

A firm believer in giving the customer what he wants, Harel says that "Our research tells us one thing loud and clear: people want a movie channel and they're prepared to pay the price. The price is not an obstacle. And on that movie channel, they want, first, comedies; second, romance; third adventure; fourth, police stories; science-fiction, adult movies and films for children."

Harel notes incidentally that from the '84 to the '85 survey, adult films rose to third from seventh place in order of preference, and while he describes such films as a moral "grey area", Super Ecran does run them, "but we aren't going to take a page in the program guide to advertise the fact."

The overall result has been eight months of steady subscriber growth. "Since last October, we haven't had any negative months, even during a

traditionally hollow month like January, there was growth, less of it, but growth nonetheless," says Harel.

"We've only just begun to reach our potential. As of September '85 we expect to be in a period of considerable growth. With any product, once you reach a certain level, the next steps happen all by themselves. We're over 10% penetration now. When we get to 12, the next two or three growth points will follow automatically. It's not utopian to expect penetration of 15% by the end of '86."

That's the good news.

The bad news is, as Harel puts it, that "When we come to Canadian content, we have a problem," a problem that stems from broadcasting 720 hours of movies per month, 60% of which are American. "In the beginning, supply was less of a problem. We took whatever was on the shelves, sometimes going back 20-30 years. Today we use all or 95% of world annual production of

broadcastable films. In global terms there are only some 500 features produced in a year; of these 350 can be shown on television. At 23 titles a month, that's gone in a year. So we're literally supplying ourselves from day-to-day.

"When it comes to Canadian product, the shelves are empty. So in terms of Canadian content, there's a big problem. It's fine to say we have to broadcast 30% Canadian content in primetime, but if it's not there, you have to repeat titles to meet that rule. But that's what killed pay-TV's first wave. It's Catch-22. And that's why we want to be relieved at least until Canadian production can keep up with CRTC regulations."

That's why Super Ecran will be filing for reduction of Canadian content levels - Harel estimates to around 10-15% - until the web's license expires in March 1987. At any rate, he notes that, in fact, Super Ecran

cont. on p. 59



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LEGAL EYE

by Michael Bergman

Speaking censored

Is censorship obscene or will obscenity drown in censorship?

Censorship of film in Canada is a controversial issue. Those on all sides of the argument are essentially arguing the same thing from a different perspective, namely, freedom of expression. If censorship limits expression it should be abolished. If obscenity offends expression in a free society then obscenity must be suppressed. There is almost a certain argument as to the limit of freedom of expression and apart from the political or philosophical facet of the question there are many interesting legal elements.

One of the newest of these

legal elements is our new Canadian Charter of Rights found in the Canadian Constitution which guarantees freedom of expression subject to the demonstrable limitations in a free and democratic society. The effect of the Charter of Rights has yet to be properly tested in the censorship issue. The Charter of Rights has inserted a new variable into the mix as legal thinking in this area. Prior to the Charter traditional constitutional thinking emphasized the sovereignty of Parliament. It was for Parliament to legislate on appropriate matters and through its own legislation to safeguard fundamental rights.

The creation of a Charter of Rights as the supreme law of the land in the Constitution has now given much of Parliament's previously understood authority to the courts. It is now up to the courts through the use of the Charter of Rights to protect fundamental freedoms.

It is therefore important for those on both sides of the censorship issue to appreciate how courts may look at film censorship problems and apply the law accordingly. There has been a general tendency particularly in obscenity issues to look for the Canadian community standard. Indeed, this is the requirement for prosecution under obscenity provisions of the Canadian Criminal Code. A publication or film is not obscene if it meets Canadian community standards. It takes no great amount of thinking to realize that any kind of community standard is nebulous and changing. Trying to establish a Canadian standard

is of necessity an evening-out process as standards may vary from community to community and region to region in the country.

This has been the problem and source of frequent criticism of using community standards. In today's tolerant society it is not hard to say that the use of Canadian community standards has led the courts to look for the highest common denominator of tolerance and to accept as not being obscene all but the most violent or degrading material.

Just one example of the problem of Canadian community standards arises in the consideration of obscene material as regards women. While there is probably a general attitude that human dignity requires certain respectful treatment of the human person, just what this dignity is is hard to define. To what extent the sexual portrayal of the female body offends human dignity seems to

be uncertain. Today we accept the most explicit demonstrations that cannot be considered dignified in the general sense of the word.

Furthermore, community standards impose the views of the majority. A democratic society seeking to protect minority rights is in principle supposed to be tolerant of dissident views. If the majority considers something obscene, why should this material be suppressed for the willing minority?

The attempt to regulate what we see on the screen through Censor Boards is highly controversial. The imposition of the views of a small group of censors on what we see is surely the reverse of the above example. Here a small minority is imposing their views on the majority. Censor Boards have been the subject of recent litigation, particularly in Ontario where its extensive and seemingly conservative board which has a wide-ranging impact.

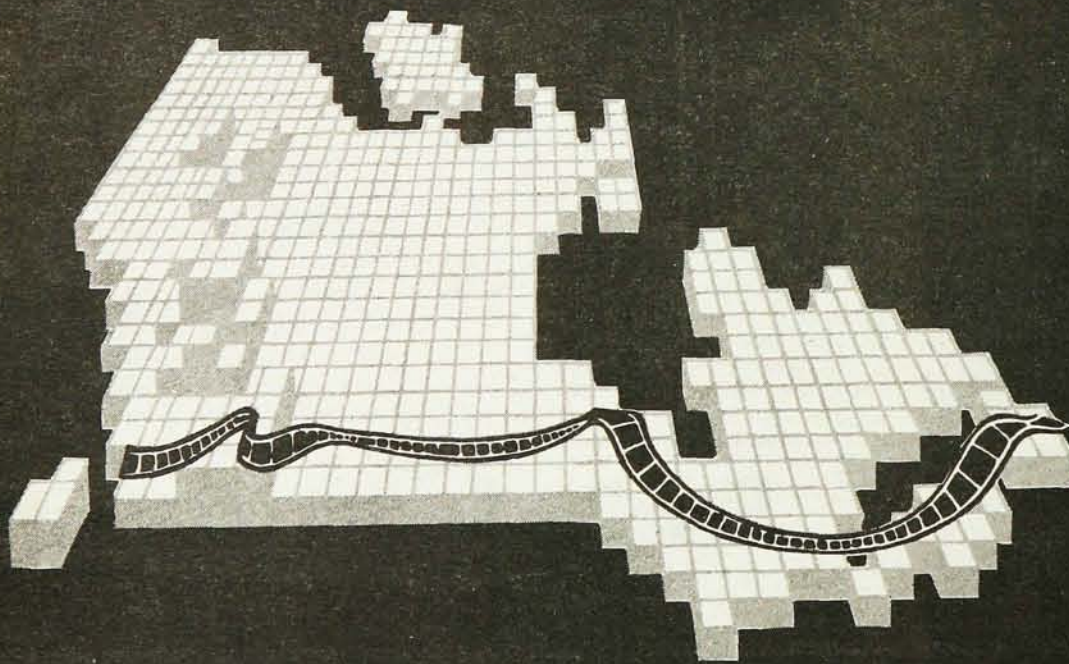
In recent litigation the Ontario Supreme Court found that the previous legislation on which the provincial Censor Board was based contained at best vague guidelines which would not give filmmakers or the general public adequate notice of what kind of standards they would be expected to meet.

With the Charter of Rights, it will be a difficult task to formulate guidelines and standards for any Censor Board. Censorship is a limit on the absolute freedom of expression. To what extent this limit is reasonable in a democratic society will be open to intense debates and subject to changing community attitudes. It is for this reason that censorship imposition will probably become increasingly more difficult to sustain in the face of continuing litigation over the subject. Censorship, particularly of political or artistic and creative expression, amounts to a restriction of ideas. Surely if freedom of expression is to mean anything it means tolerating even objectionable notions. The limits of this are difficult to define. When objectionable notions become perversion cannot be said with precision.

The law does not like uncertainty or interpretations based on the events of the moment. It is for this reason that the Charter will probably ultimately reduce censorship activities to manifest horrors such as child abuse and sexual violence that would repel most people. This is not to say that government will not be able to impose viewing restrictions as to what age groups may view certain material.

A particular application of the censorship problem applies to home videos and other films which may be viewed in the privacy of one's residence.

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There is some move afoot to restrict and censor home videos, a notion which flies in the face of the king-of-the-castle concept. If we are the ultimate authority within the confines of our private residence, is it not an invasion of privacy for others to restrict what we see within those confines?

Censorship is both a political issue and a legal issue. Making the film community's views

known will be an important factor in determining both political and legal results. On the political level the reason for this is obvious: government response to lobbying groups. On the legal level, though, there is much work to be done by the film industry. The development, for example, of obscenity guidelines within the industry as a kind of internal regulation might be a code the courts will

take into account in determining what is objectionable. Furthermore, organized guidelines would tend to eliminate the argument that Censor Boards provide a policing role which the industry has abdicated. Not that the industry should censor itself, but rather at least control the most obvious expressions blatant depravity.

Such guidelines, made in consultation with all elements

of the industry community, will no doubt enhance the image among the general public and provide an important tool to fend off the censor's hand.

Michael N. Bergman, barrister and solicitor, is a member of the Bars of Quebec, Ontario and Alberta, with offices in Montreal and Toronto.

Ontario production down vs. summer '84

TORONTO - Film production is down in Ontario compared to this time last year. Gail Thomson of the Ontario Film & Video Office told Cinema Canada that "it's quite a bit less" but she had no official figures. She cited four pictures in production as of mid-June including *Anne of Green Gables*, *The Campbells*, *Night Heat* and *Over Night*. Thomson said that there were many more productions in the works but nothing had firmed. She said that she was "fairly confident that production will be up by the end of the summer."

ACPAV wins with Petit Prince adaptation in Spain

MONTREAL - The Association Cooperative de Productions Audio Visuelle (ACPAV) production of *Cher Monsieur l'Aviateur* has been awarded first prize in the short fiction category at the International Short Festival held in Murcia, Spain Apr. 17-26.

The film was directed in 1984 by Michel Poulette and was conceived and written by Normand Desjardins based on the famous Saint-Exupery story *Le Petit Prince*.

SuperEcran

cont. from p. 57

has already fallen below 30%, to around 25-26%, and that will continue to drop as time goes on. To further compound the paradox of Canadian content, in-house promotion of non-Canadian film clips, about an hour per day of Super Ecran's programming, does count as Canadian content.

At the same time, Harel says that, had pay-TV gained access to the Broadcast Fund (an access nixed by last March's revisions), "that would have given us the motivation to search for available (production) investment." As things stand, however, Harel says Super Ecran has no plans at present to go into production, "though we intend to when our means will allow us."

TORONTO - The Directors Guild held a two-day symposium June 15-16 on television production. Ray Sager, organizer of the event, said that the aim of the symposium was to "reeducate the guild about television." He pointed to the fact that most of production work today was for television. He said that turnout had been reasonable with 105 people registered.

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Greenberg streamlines Astral organization, promotes Cobbett

MONTREAL - Harold Greenberg, president and CEO of Astral Bellevue Pathe Inc., announced a series of promotions June 17 within the company's Entertainment Division to streamline the operations of the various subsidiaries.

Heading the list is the appointment of Stuart Cobbett as president of Astral Film Enterprises, ABP's coordinating entity in the entertainment and communications field. Cobbett, a lawyer, recently joined ABP as a corporate vice-president. He retains his corporate responsibilities, while adding coordination of day-to-day operations of the Entertainment Division.

Other promotions include the naming of Gordon Guiry as president of Astral Films; David Jackson as president of Entertainment Programming Services (EPS); and Stephen Greenberg as vice-president of Astral Television.

Greenberg also announced that Ian Greenberg, vice-president and treasurer of ABP, has been named vice-chairman of

the board of First Choice Canadian Communications Corporation. He will be responsible for liaison between First Choice and Astral, which has the controlling interest in the pay-TV service. Harold Greenberg remains chairman of the executive committee of First Choice and chairman of the board of SuperEcran, the French-language service.

Also on the corporate front, Greenberg announced that the board of directors of Astral Bellevue Pathe Inc. has been expanded to include George Cohon, president and chief executive officer of McDonald's Restaurants of Canada Ltd., and Bill L'Heureux, senior vice-president of Hees International Corporation.

"As we look forward over the next decade-and-a-half and into the 21st century, new technologies and changes in consumer tastes and viewing habits will continue to affect the entertainment and communications marketplace," Greenberg said.

"Astral has been successful thus far because our corporate structure has evolved with the industry. The appointments announced today reflect our determination to continue that evolution, while positioning the company to benefit from the continued growth and prosperity of the entertainment industry."

Formerly vice-president of Astral Films, Guiry maintains responsibility for both Astral Video and Screencraft Video Inc., in addition to his new duties with the theatrical distribution arm of the company.

Formerly vice-president and general manager of EPS, David Jackson is now responsible for overseeing this joint venture between Astral Bellevue Pathe and Twentieth Century Fox Telecommunications, which distributes the feature films and television programming of the two companies for conventional and pay television in Canada.

As vice-president of Astral Television, Stephen Greenberg

will be responsible for the development and acquisition of programming for conventional, cable and pay television.

Two other components of the company's Entertainment Division, Bellevue Pathe Quebec and Bellevue Home Entertainment, continue to be headed by Andre Collette and Isar Klaiman respectively.

Astral Film Enterprises will

continue with the four-person team already in place - Jocelyne Pelchat-Johnson, vice-president, Planning; Sam Berliner, vice-president, Legal and Business Affairs; Stephen Greenberg, vice-president, Acquisitions and Packaging; and Peter Ryan, vice-president and controller. They will now report to Cobbett.

BC sponsors Expo Showscan

VANCOUVER - The British Columbia government has become the latest employer of Vancouver's filmmaking talents. *Showscan*, a \$2.5 million, 18-minute short will go into production during the month of August and will finish with two weeks in September.

Vancouver's Fairuza Balk (Dorothy in Disney's soon-to-be-released *Return To Oz*) will star. Toronto's Peter O'Brian will produce, with Rob Turner's directing.

Showscan will run through the duration of EXPO '86 in the

city's new B.C. Pavillion. Theatrically, *Showscan* will embrace both the historic and futuristic aspects of the province and its people. It will be shot on 65mm at 60 frames per second, and projected on 70mm at 60 frames per second - a technique often employed with special effects because of the exquisite rendering of detail and immediacy.

Locations for the promotional drama will vary, with such areas as Vancouver Island, and north, to the Clinton and Squamish regions.

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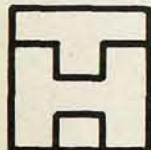
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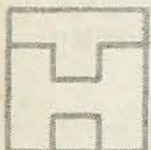
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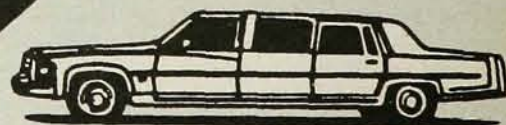
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Munro greets filmmakers at big Fest of Fests press conference

TORONTO - Fresh from the swearing-in ceremony where she became Ontario's first Liberal minister for Citizenship and Culture, a somewhat dazed Lily Munro announced an open-door policy to the film community at the Festival of Festivals' press reception on June 26, held to unveil the festival's tenth anniversary program. In a short speech, Munro said she was "looking forward to getting to know you better." She told the audience that she wanted them "to feel free to talk to me." Wayne Clarkson, festival director, presented the novice minister with a framed copy of this year's festival poster. He proceeded to enumerate an exhaustive list of films and events for the upcoming festival which will run from September 5 to 14.

Opening the festival will be the North American premiere of *Joshua Then and Now*. Produced by RSL and directed by Ted Kotcheff from Mordecai Richler's novel of the same name, the film had its world premiere to considerable public acclaim at the Cannes Film Festival. Also making its North American premiere will be Paul Schrader's *Mishima*, the controversial biopic of the Japanese writer.

Other gala presentations will include Argentinian Luis Puenzo's film on the "disaparecidos" *The Official Version*; Istvan Szabo's *Colonel Redl* from Hungary; and from England Terry Gilliam's surreal sci-fi film *Brazil*.

Major names attending the galas include most of the stars of *Joshua* - James Woods, Alan Arkin, Michael Sarrazin, Linda Sorensen as well as Ted Kotcheff and Mordecai Richler.

Paul Schrader, producer Tom Luddy and composer Philip Glass will be on hand for *Mishima*. Puenzo and his star Norma Aleandro (recently voted best actress with Cher at the Cannes fest) should be present for *The Official Version*. Other gala attendees will include Szabo, Klaus Maria Brandauer (*Colonel Redl*) and Gilliam.

Among other events to look forward to is a program of Contemporary World Cinema with a preponderance of films from West Germany including *Altman's Regel* (Manuel Siebenmann); *Kaminsky* (Michael Lahn); *Hyena's Breakfast* (Elfi Mikesch); *Seduction: The Cruel Woman* (Monika Treut and Elfi Mikesch); *King Kong's Fist* (Heiner Stadler); *Lieber Karl* (Maria Knilli) and *Morenga* (Egon Gunther). Films from other countries confirmed to date are: *The Children* (Marguerite Duras, France); *Strange Love Affair* (Eric de Kuyper, Netherlands); *Spelling Love* (Mary Jiminez, Belgium); *Searchers in the Desert* (Nacer

Khemir, Tunisia); *Heat Until Daw* (Laurice Guillen, Philippines); *Oh My Love and Runaway* (Sin Sang Ok, North Korea); *Yellow Earth* (Chen Kaige, People's Republic of China); *Dim Sum* (Wayne Wang, USA); *George Stevens, Diary of a Filmmaker* (George Stevens, USA); and *Twenty Years Later* (Eduardo Coutinho, Brazil).

To celebrate its 10th anniversary the festival is presenting the works of 10 filmmakers whose work "should be among the major film statements of the next ten years." With the sponsorship of Air Canada, the festival will present 75 films by the following directors: Chantal Akerman (Belgium); Philip Borsos (Canada); Lino Brocka (Philippines); Paul Cox (Australia); Bill Forsyth (Scotland); Alan Rudolph (United States); Paul Ruiz (Chile - living in European exile); Andrei Tarkovsky (Soviet Union - living in European exile); Bertrand Tavernier (France); Margarethe von Trotta (West Germany).

Perspective Canada is back for a second year with programmers screening over 150 submissions for a program of the finest in current Canadian production. As last year there will be a \$5,000 prize for the winner of the Toronto-City Award For Excellence in Canadian Production.

For film buffs the Festival has lined up an archival series of restored and often re-coloured classics. The Open Vault series is being selected by Sam Kula, director of the National Film, TV & Sound Archives. Films confirmed to date include: *Becky Sharp* (Rouben Mamoulian, 1935, USA); *Way Down East* (D.W. Griffith, 1920, USA); *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc* (Carl Dreyer, 1928, France); *Nosferatu* (F. W. Murnau, 1927, Germany).

A series called Looking Back

will celebrate 10 years of buried treasures. A panel of film critics and personalities will select their own buried treasure from previous festival years.

Finally, in recognition of the

way Toronto has opened its heart to the festival, Clarkson announced a series of free family movies to be screened in High Park on the Labour Day Weekend.

Clarkson noted that ticket

prices will remain the same as last year. Total number of films will be down from a peak of 450 to about 250. However, to allow greater access to all films Clarkson said each film will be screened at least twice.



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Trade Forum extends offer to industry at annual confab

TORONTO - Deal Yourself In will be the theme of the seventh annual Trade Forum at the Festival of Festivals. The forum will run from September 4 to September 7. It will be organized into seminars (financing options, the expanding family market, promotion and marketing) and workshops (advanced production business affairs, low-budget feature film production, post-production options). For the second year running the Trade Forum will run a computerized co-production registry service.

Federal budget has little to affect film/television financing

The May 1985 federal budget held very little of direct consequence for the film and television production industry. However, generally the budget increased the benefits to be had from investing in the industry.

The Capital Cost Allowance remains for the time being, but it is subject to review as part of the discussion paper on Minimum Tax. The government has proposed implementing such a minimum tax January 1, 1986, although such an early implementation is unlikely given the public discussion of the issue sought by the government. In the meantime, because production investment is one of the few remaining tax shelters and because of the surtaxes on personal and corporate income, it is anticipated that there will be a greater number of production industry investment opportunities this year than last. It is also anticipated that some offerings will include features to defer revenue until after the surtax is lifted January 1, 1987. This will help investors beat the surtax twice. Once on the original monies sheltered and again on the income flowing from the film investment.

It is not yet known what

impact the \$500,000 (\$50,000 in Québec) lifetime Capital Gain exemption will have on tax deferral-based production investment. The comparison is not simple. For example, the investor who doesn't have sufficient cash to pay taxes owing may be interested in deferring those taxes by investing in quality tax shelters. Even investors with surplus cash are having second thoughts about only investing for anticipated capital gains using after-tax dollars. The shock of paying all their taxes last year, deferring none of it, has made many of them swear never to do it again.

The timing and degree of permanence of the exemption have become significant considerations. Phil Dunn, a partner in the accounting firm of Ernst & Whinney, points out that because "the capital gains exemption is being phased in over a six-year period commencing in 1985, with larger exemptions available in later years, it is unlikely to be a major consideration during the next few years for film investors with significant funds to invest."

Finally, because the capital gains exemption is only of use once an investment has been

sold for a profit, investors are concerned that the exemption benefit may be short term. If the capital gains exemption does not show any sign of providing stimulation to the economy through increased private investment, the government could just as easily take the exemption away in three or four years, just before the next federal election.

In Quebec the capital gains exemption is even less attractive. The Quebec government has stated that the exemption will be phased in over two years and the exemption for Quebec investors is \$50,000 rather than \$500,000. However according to Michael Prupas, of Heenan Blaikie Jolin Potvin Trepanier Cobbett of Montreal, "The Quebec government has not ruled out increasing the exemption at a later time."

To the extent that the capital gains exemption exists however, the production industry will also benefit. Increased investment activity should benefit companies such as Astral Bellevue Pathé, Cineplex, and Tegra (VSE), to name a few with post-production, distribution or exhibition interests. Benefits should also be available for production

companies whether they be private or public such as the existing VSE listing, Moonshine Productions Ltd. which has produced *Samuel Lount*.

Phil Dunn points out that the Minimum Tax mentioned in the budget, depending upon how it is implemented, could "provide a dampening effect on film investment, although this is uncertain, until the system itself is determined. However, the three alternatives open for discussion all include film investment deductions in the list of 'tax preferences.'" He explains that "tax preferences are intended either:

- Not to be allowed as a deduction for tax purposes, or
- To be taxed at a flat rate, or
- Limited as a deduction for tax purposes, with a carryover to future years."

There has been no word yet as to how the producers' associations are going to advise the government on this issue during the period of consultation. It is presumed that they will. Well prepared submissions to the government appear to be effective with the government. Prior to the budget it was rumoured that the capital cost allowance would disappear. The producers' associations, the Associa-

tion of Canadian Film and Television Producers (ACFTP), the Canadian Film and Television Association (CFTA) and the Association des producteurs de films du Québec (APFQ) submitted briefs to the Department of Finance and Revenue Canada a month prior to the budget. It is now rumoured that this activity resulted in the Capital Cost Allowance being retained for films. In addition to the Minimum Tax, future discussions with the government will also need to address measures to increase investment flexibility and improve administrative simplicity. In a January survey conducted by Screen Investor Services, improvements to the federal government treatment of the production industry were suggested which would make the industry more attractive to investors. These included flow-through shares, enriched CCA, and other measures to reduce risk, increase liquidity, reward success and quality and which would encourage investment in production funds and production companies as well as individual productions.

One industry specific in the

cont. on p. 63

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Fund depleted for English production

TORONTO - The Broadcast Fund, which last year was unable to spend its annual production allocation, has in the first three months of its fiscal year committed all of its English-language production funds.

Between April 1 and the end of June, \$36 million has been allocated under the new Telefilm guidelines announced by Marcel Masse, federal Communications minister, last March. The new rules increased Telefilm's ability to invest in projects from 33% of budget to 49% under certain conditions. As well, Masse introduced a one-year scheme for Telefilm to match license fees paid to producers by broadcasters. These factors together with the opening of the Fund to educational broadcasters and documentaries have been named as the key reasons for the Fund's early depletion.

One of the architects of the new rules suggested that the rapid disbursement of the Fund had been anticipated and was partly a result of producers requesting decisions early in the year to allow for production. However, independent producers are dismayed at how quickly the well has run dry.

Iain Patterson, president of the Association of Canadian Film and Television Producers,

told Cinema Canada that "it's not a good situation. We need to be assured our projects will find a home with Telefilm." He noted that the industry has suffered chronically from the turning on and off of "the tap." He said that the industry needed "a reliable, consistent source of funding available on a continuing basis. Projects ready to go in November have to have the same chance as those ready in April. To wait nine months for Telefilm funding is impossible. Projects will evaporate."

Sam Jephcott, executive director of the Canadian Film and Television Association, expressed similar concerns. Pat Ferns, head of Primedia, said that it is "a worry." He added that Telefilm may have been going into a number of things without look as hard as it might have at the business potential." He noted that the "49% rule is the reason things are spent out."

Stephen Ellis, immediate past-president of the CFTA, expressed surprise that Telefilm should have gone through the money so quickly.

Victor Solnicki, chairman of CFTA's Telefilm Committee, said he was dismayed. "Most of us thought it might be used up by next fall. It's a surprise to all of us."

One solution that has been mooted is not to fund the renewal of successful series through Telefilm. Producers argue that once a series is launched and proved successful, renewals could be financed through realistic broadcast license fees and private investment. Series funded at the 49% level "sop up a disproportionate share of the fund," according to Solnicki.

Productions that have been approved since April 1 include *Anne of Green Gables*; *Striker's Mountain*; *Time for Miracles*; *The Body Electric*; *The Campbells*; *Danger Bay* (second series); *Goose Bumps*; *A Judgement in Stone*; and *Keeping Track*.

It is almost certain that Telefilm will be able to continue to fund English language production through a roll-over fund - \$15 million of unspent monies from previous years' Telefilm allocations. Peter Pearson, newly appointed head of Telefilm, told Cinema Canada, "We have roughly \$75 million worth of demands and \$15 million to fill them. Our criteria will be to make the best investment we can." Claude Daigneault, Telefilm's head of public relations, noted that Telefilm had ample funds left for French production.

Delegation returns from China

MONTREAL - A Canadian delegation, led by government film commissioner and chairman of the National Film Board François Macerola, returned to Montreal May 31 after a two-week visit to the People's Republic of China. The delegation had been formally invited to China by the ministry of Culture as part of an on-going reciprocal agreement between the two countries.

Last year the National Film Board hosted an official delegation from the People's Republic of China which came to Canada to gather information for the construction of a planned film palace in Beijing.

The mandate of the Canadian delegation was to maintain and to reaffirm the friendly ties between Canada and the People's Republic of China. Discussions focussed on possible documentary and television co-productions as well as sharing Canada's expertise on large-screen projection systems such as IMAX.

The itinerary included visits to Beijing, Xian, Shanghai and a three-day stopover in Japan to see the audio-visual presentations at the Tsukuba Fair.

The Canadian delegation was composed of Société Générale du Cinéma president

Nicole Boisvert; Crawley Films Ltd. president William H. Stevens Jr.; department of Communications senior deputy minister Alain Gourd; president of the Association des distributeurs et exportateurs de films and Film Option International Maryse Rouillard; president of the Alberta Motion Picture Development Corporation Lorne MacPherson; director of administration, finance and personnel of the National Film Board Barbara Emo, and office of the minister of Communications chief-of-staff Dr. Stephen Ash.

Co-ops rendez-vous

MONTREAL - At the National Independent Film and Video Conference held from May 27-June 2 in St. Johns, Newfoundland, the Independent Film Alliance/Alliance du cinéma indépendant (IFACi) decided by referendum, to change its name to the Independent Film and Video Alliance (IFVA).

At the same meeting, Jean-Pierre Lefebvre was awarded the first annual Alliance Award given by the members for outstanding contribution to independent film and video in Canada.

Federal budget analysis brings little news of immediate impact

cont. from p. 62

budget was the taxation of video cassettes. Michael Prupas states that "effective January 1, 1986 the tax rate will be increased from 10% to 11% and will be applied at the wholesale level rather than the manufacturing level." This reduces the inequity which existed in favour of companies which duplicated their cassettes in the United States but sold them in Canada. They paid less tax than those companies which duplicated in Canada. Now they all pay the same higher tax. According to Michael Prupas, "The retailer may be hurt most by this measure." Competitive pressures may make it hard for them to pass on the increase to the consumer.

Ian McCullum

Ian McCullum is president of Screen Investor Services which, in association with Ernst & Whinney, provides investor representation, contract management, trustee and other services to the production industry.

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APFQ adds 'vidéo' to name, elects Pierre Valcour president

MONTREAL - The Association des Producteurs de Films du Québec (APFQ) held its annual general meeting on May 29 in Montreal during which its members voted to change the name of the organization to the Association des Producteurs de Films et de Vidéos du Québec (APFVQ).

Also on the agenda at the general assembly was the election of a new board of directors with four members getting elected to top administrative positions. Pierre Valcour of Ciné-Mundo Inc. is the new

president; Pieter Kroonenburg was elected vice-president. René Villeneuve was elected secretary and Rock Demers of Les Productions La Fete, treasurer.

Other members elected to the board were Tom Berry of Films Allegro, André Blais of AV+, Nicole de Rochemont of Les Productions SDA, Pierre Jacob of Films 24 Inc., Yves Plouffe of Télépro Inc., Michelle Raymonde of Productions Via Le Monde Inc. and Robin Spry of Productions Téléscene Inc.

Vanfest unique success with modest assistance

VANCOUVER - The Vancouver Film Fest has come and gone, completing its fourth year. Festival director Leonard Schein, together with enthusiastic staff and volunteers conjured a world class fest on a small-time budget. With a \$10,000 grant from Telefilm, the month-long festival wooed 62,000 attendees. When compared with other and older festivals (San Francisco, for example, with its attendance of 25,000) Schein has reason to feel a sense of accomplishment. Next year, the festival will open at 10 theatres, the Cineplex and Odeon included, with a stable of 500 films.

The festival had a unique touch this year, with its 'Secret Festival' screenings at five locations, which tested the zeal and curiosity of film aficionados by withholding titles and descriptions.

The sold-out performances included *Birdy*, *Camilla*, *Gregory's Girl*, *The Best of UCLA films*, *Antartica*, *The Home and the World*, *Insignificance*, *A Matter Of Heart*, *My New Partner*, *Nostalgia*, *Sheer Madness*, *Success Is The Best Revenge*, and *And Woman In Flames*.

In-person celebs included: John Antonelli, Bill Forsythe, Henry Jaglom, Waris Hussen, Marsha Masson, Ed McNamara, Nicholas Roeg, Bobby Roth, Theresa Russell, Greta Schiller, Rene Soutendijk and Michael York.

Running concomitant with the Seattle Film Fest, guest appearances as well as some interchange of prints, gave vigor to both.

TORONTO - Cineplex Corporation unveiled its new name and logo on June 28. Henceforth, the theatrical chain will be called Cineplex Odeon Corporation. The name reflects Cineplex's acquisition of the larger Odeon cinemas one year ago. The new corporate logo represents a graphic depiction of the ancient Greek amphitheatre.

Hy moves on docu-dramas

VANCOUVER - Hy Perspectives Media Group of Vancouver has recently been given Telefilm development funding for *The Pendant*, a one-hour television drama.

The first draft of *The Pendant* will be completed by end June and the production, which deals with capital punishment, will be shot in Spring, 1986.

Harvey Crossland of Hy Perspectives who alternates producing and directing with partner Ric Beirsto, is in the editing suite with their last work, *Close To Home*. Slated for television broadcast, this go-minute film deals domestic sexual abuse, vagrancy and prostitution among the young.

Based on composites from real-life stories gathered through years of research and interviewing, *Close To Home* deals with areas currently at issue before the Fraser Commission on how to understand, manage and legislate prostitution.

Three years in the making, the \$450,000 docu/drama, filmed in Vancouver, Seattle and Reno, will be released in July.

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Takaya, production company from B C, launched by George clan

VANCOUVER - Visitors to this year's Cannes Festival had the opportunity to appreciate a unique and distinct segment of native Canadian culture. Leonard George, son of the late Chief Dan George, was there to introduce his production house.

Takaya was inspired by the memory and wishes of the Chief, who created an all-new image of the Canadian/American Indian with his cardinal role in *Little Big Man*.

The endearing thespian, who died in 1981, lives on with the incarnation of the Chief Dan George Memorial Foundation Society, whose mandate is to further the involvement of native people in both the film and video industry. Set up by the George family, the Foundation will provide financial backing for training and a locus for the innate talent and creativity of a people with a rich heritage in theatre and drama.

At Cannes, Leonard George and Michael Huppé, president of TeleVector Agencies (Vancouver), who represent Takaya, were the sole visitors from western Canada. They negotiated pre-sales with international buyers, petitioned on behalf of the domestic industry and harnessed a wave of

European sentiment toward the Canadian Indian. Says Huppé, himself an Indian, "The Indian is very vogue in international circles now. They've been brought up on cowboy and Indian stories. Leonard George's presence made the projects very saleable, not only because he is the Chief's son, but because he represented the Canadian Indian."

The 1984-formed Takaya will produce a 90-minute special for television, called *Native Celebration '86*, that will be broadcast, worldwide via satellite, during the opening of EXPO '86, in Vancouver. The pre-recorded first 60 minutes is a docu/drama of native cultural, artistic and spiritual heritage. Following the EXPO themes of communication and transportation, the production will employ electronic techniques to unfold a historic drama with Native performers, dancers, carvers and storytellers. The second third of the program will capture "live" the opening of the World's Fair.

While the 90-minute special is produced, Takaya will also be shooting footage for 20 half-hours of educational and entertaining programming, with a Native theme, for television broadcast.

With hopes of becoming an established production house, Takaya looks toward the future by offering an interesting and unique base in British Columbia for crewing, casts, locations and sets. Profits from produc-

tion sales will be reinvested in the foundation's directives.

A production titled *Chief* is slated for shooting as soon as the EXPO presentation has been made. The feature, starring Leonard George as his

venerable father, will tell the story of the Chief's life, from boyhood on Burrard Inlet, following his days through moviedom, until his demise in 1981.

Radio broadcasters ask for relief from CanContent

OTTAWA - In the light of increasing pressures from radio broadcasters to reduce Canadian musical content on the airwaves and the failure of leading French-language broadcasters to increase record production by developing Canadian talent, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) has announced the formation of a task force on French-language popular music.

The task force, whose formation was announced May 22, will include participation of the broadcasting, recording, and entertainment industries, government officials, performers and other experts.

The task force's mandate "is to gather all pertinent data, in consultation with all interested parties," assess the availability of French-language recordings for each type of popular music,

whether produced in Quebec or elsewhere in Canada, Europe or other francophone countries, and examine the means in which broadcasters, industries, and other interested parties, can stimulate new French-language musical talent to produce records and music videos.

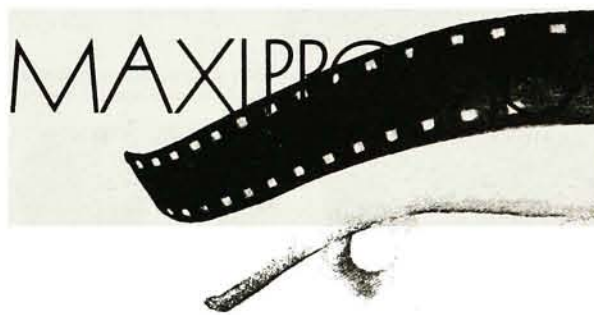
Formation of the task force follows recent requests from Montreal broadcasters CKOI-FM, CKMF-FM, CITE-FM, and Quebec City's CHOI-FM to reduce French-language vocal music levels from the 65% now required. While the CRTC denied the requests, one licensee, according to the Commission's public notice, "acknowledged that its efforts to develop Canadian talent had not achieved their main objective, which was to increase the production of French-language records."

"The reduction of the minimum of 65% French-language music could have an important

impact on the cultural industries of Quebec," commented CRTC chairman André Bureau adding that "The exception to this minimum requirement, already granted to some stations following specific commitments to promote the development of French-language music, has not produced the desired improvement."

Meanwhile, the Commission May 21 approved Saskatoon broadcaster Rawlco Communications' application to reduce CFMC-FM's broadcast hours in traditional and special interest music from a currently authorized 10 hours/week to a minimum of eight hours per week. Referring to the radio review policy of March 1983, the Commission noted that FM stations would generally not be permitted to reduce such programming to less than eight hours per week.

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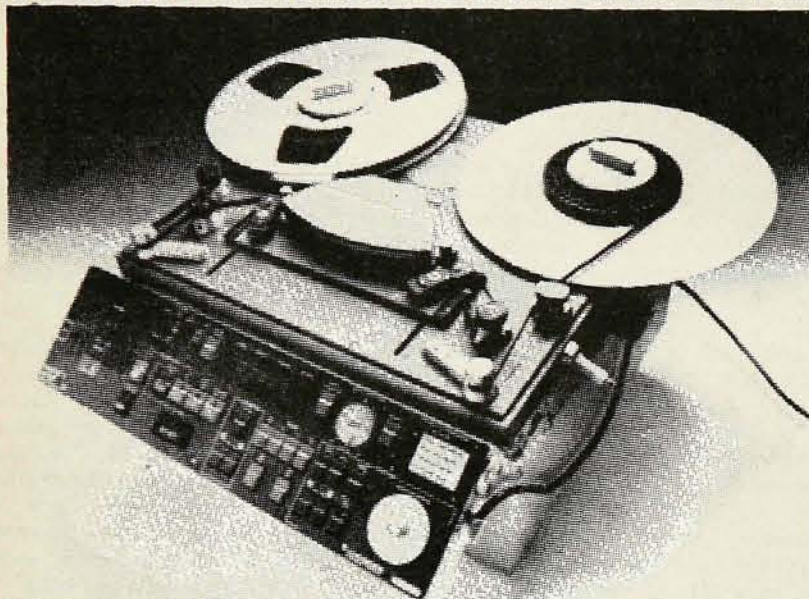
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CINE MAG

Blue Line sales promising for Allegro, more NFB coproductions in works

MONTREAL - The successful completion of *Blue Line*, a one-hour made-for-TV dramatic movie, was celebrated by a screening of the film in Montreal on May 22. Produced by Les productions de la Chouette, a holding company for Allegro Films, in collaboration with the National Film Board, *Blue Line* has an interesting financing and distribution background.

Co-written and co-produced by Tom Berry of Allegro Films and Stefan Wodoslawsky of the NFB, *Blue Line* had a total production cost of \$540,000. Telefilm Canada picked up 33 percent of the total production cost. Les Productions de la Chouette contributed \$100,000 with Montreal's CTV affiliate, CFCF-TV, and Health and Welfare Canada accounting for the remaining private sector investment.

"What we set out to do," Berry told Cinema Canada, "was to make a made-for-TV film with a very high and very slick production value. We presented the idea to CFCF's vice-president of programming, Rick Merrill, and he immediately approved of the project and didn't waste any time having the station back it. Getting Telefilm to invest in the project was relatively easy after the agreement with CFCF."

"The NFB's coproduction involvement in *Blue Line*," continued Berry, "was 37 percent of the production, while Pro-

ductions de la Chouette, as main producers had 67 percent. Our relationship with the NFB is great. Stefan (Wodoslawsky) and I are interested in producing the same type of films and his being at the NFB means that he can take care of the bureaucratic red tape which always accompanies everything the Film Board is involved with.

"What television networks want is a product that will be competitive on a prime-time market. *Blue Line* is just that," explained Berry, "It is very marketable. The story, although aimed at a teen-age market, is accessible to all audiences. The production value is very good and the film's soundtrack has great commercial value."

The film's soundtrack includes songs by some of today's top popular music performers including Luba, Men Without Hats, Honeymoon Suite as well as David Bowie.

The commercial and market value of *Blue Line* are illustrated by the numerous television networks which have purchased the rights to air the one hour production. The North American sales agents for *Blue Line*, Tom Berry and Franco Battista of Allegro Films, have already concluded sales with CFCF-TV, the First-Choice/Superchannel pay-TV network, Global television and City-TV. As well, the film will be syndicated in the Maritimes and in Western Canada by Kaleidoscope as part of the agreement with Global-TV. *Blue Line* has also been purchased by Home Box Office (HBO), an American pay-TV network with 14.5 million subscribers. This represents a total of more than 30 broadcasts over the next nine years in North America. The NFB is handling the film's European distribution.

"All the networks which have bought *Blue Line* have been very pleased with the production value of the film and have offered very interesting/plans for it," Berry told Cinema Canada.

Allegro, again in association with the NFB, began pre-production on another made-for-TV film. This one entitled *Huggers* is also co-written and co-produced by Berry and Wodoslawsky.

"After the success of *Blue Line* it was a lot easier to get people interested in financing and buying *Huggers*. CFCF-TV, who holds the Canadian rights to *Huggers*, was immediately interested in getting involved in the project," said Berry.

"The film will be sold as a package deal with a film about the making of *Huggers*," explains Berry, "We are also very confident about the success of this project."



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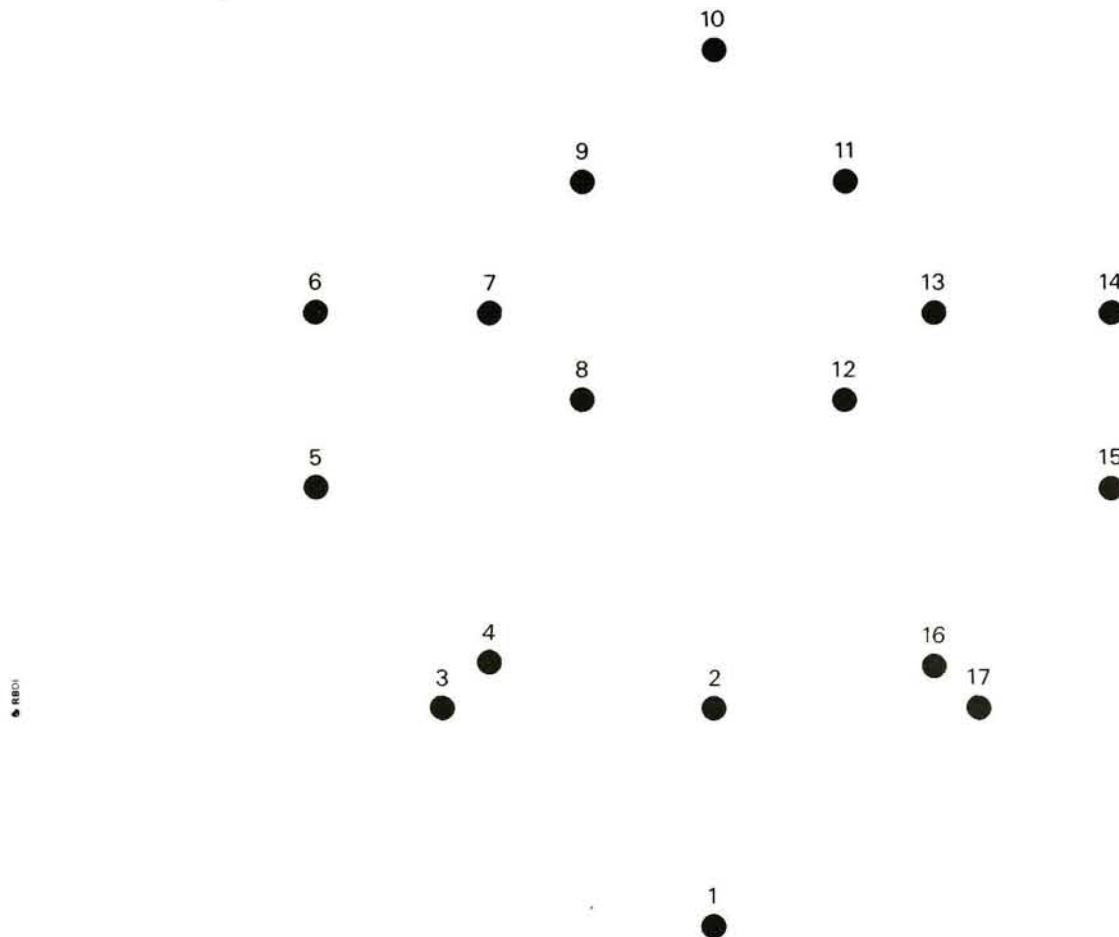
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Carota opens first Maritime studio

MONCTON - Carota Films Ltd., a film and video production company from Moncton, New Brunswick, inaugurated its new sound studio in Shediac, NB, on June 28.

The opening of the Carota Films Studio marks an important step in the history of film and video production in the Maritimes. In fact, the studio is the first and only independent production studio in all of the Maritime provinces, making its success important not only to owner and president Lawrence Carota, but also to the whole Maritime film and video production community as well as for the Maritime region in general, Carota told Cinema Canada.

"The facilities were built, first and foremost, for the needs of our own production company," said Carota. "We do, however, anticipate good use of the facilities by the region's independent producers. We are also hoping that the National Film Board will take advantage of the new studio during its productions in the Maritimes. After all, if they don't, it is their loss.

"The construction and furnishing costs of the studio is easily over \$250,000," added Carota, "and that's just for the

basics. The financial assistance we received from the department of Commerce and Development was necessary. Actually, the government has been very supportive of the project all along."

Some of the main objectives of the Carota Film Studio are to play an active role in the revitalization of the film and video industry in Eastern Canada as well as to encourage the development of local talent and technical experts.

"The opening of the Studio," said Carota, "is for me a vision which comes from 16 years' experience in the industry. I have experienced periods where there was absolutely no work and other times when there was a lack of facilities and equipment to do any work. The Maritimes are definitely ready for an accessible and well-equipped production studio. It is better for the product if the producers are spending less time with the scheduling of their productions and more time working on the product itself.

"The reaction of the local independent producers has been one of great interest in the facilities. For me to break even," continued Carota, "the Studio would have to be used

at only 50 percent capacity, but that would certainly not satisfy me. Realistically, our expectations are that the Studio will be used considerably more. With the regionalization of Telefilm Canada, there is probably going to be a lot of activity in the production industry in the Maritimes. As well, we will make the studio available to out-of-town producers."

Located on a convenient five-acre site in Shediac, NB, Carota Films Studio's sound stage is equipped with the latest in studio standard facilities, including a soundproof production studio measuring 40' x 60' x 18', permitting for large-scale productions, a versatile control room able to handle film, video and multi-camera shoots, film and video editing facilities as well as off-line viewing for Beta, one inch, 3/4 inch and 16mm, a state-of-the-art sound recording facility, office space, conference and editing suite and last, but certainly not least, a whirlpool.

"We would also like to have high standard acting, lighting, directing and editing workshops for the area's professionals who are already working in the industry," explained Carota, "This would help upgrade the professional standard

of the Maritime's industry to that of the rest of the country. It would also keep the Studio pretty busy.

"We do not consider ourselves as competitors to the local television studios," concluded Carota, "We see ourselves more as a complement to the services and facilities which they already supply. In the end, it is the entire Maritime production industry which is benefiting from the new Studio and that is the most important thing."

Ciné Est has two pilots ready to go

MONCTON - New Brunswick's Ciné Est en Action, an affiliate company of Carota Films Inc., took advantage of the opening celebrations of the new Carota Films Studio to announce that it will be producing two half-hour television pilots for the CBC with a combined budget of \$600,000.

The two projects are planned for broadcast on CBC's Fall '86 line-up with one appearing on the French network and the other one on the English network.

The French pilot, entitled *Cap Lumière* which is to be the

first in a series entitled *Il s'ont été variables*, is a tender love story about a gay actress and her secretary/lover as they near the end of their lives and try to recreate the moment of their meeting. *Cape Lumière* was written by Acadian writer Monique Leblanc and will be directed by Acadian Hermé-gild Chiasson. The pilot will be produced by Lawrence Carota, of Carota Films Inc., in collaboration, in a lesser capacity, with the National Film Board.

The English pilot, written by Bruce McKenna and Karen Carota, who will also produce the show, is described by Carota as a "drama with humour throughout." Under the working title of *Getting to Work*, the pilot will be, as Carota told Cinema Canada, "touching on a lot of social issues without trying to make any real social statement. We will be laughing at ourselves by seeing realistic characters in real situations."

Production on *Getting to Work* begins on July 29 while *Cape Lumière* begins production in the first week in September.

Both productions will be taking advantage of the new facilities at Carota Films Inc. and will be shot exclusively in the Maritimes, creating a lot of employment for the area's film industry and related services.



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