

Masse heads cultural offensive

MONTREAL — Federal Communications Minister Marcel Masse is spearheading what some observers consider the potentially largest offensive for a concerted Canadian cultural policy since the pan-Canada euphoria of Expo '67.

The current offensive is aimed at convincing Masse's cabinet colleagues of the need to surround upcoming free-trade talks with the U.S. with a legislative program repatriating the Canadian cultural domestic market in publishing, film and video. The opportunity was unwittingly provided by U.S. film industry chief lobbyist Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America.

Valenti, in an article published in *The Los Angeles Times* and reproduced Feb. 3 in the *Montreal Gazette*, threw down the gauntlet "to all nations that roam the U.S. marketplace with freedom and profit but construct the most ingenious hedgerows barring their marketplace to the Americans", citing Taiwan, Colombia, Canada, Quebec, Spain, Indonesia and India where trade "barriers stand guard against us."

Responding to Valenti in the same newspaper, Masse pointed to "the structural problem" created by U.S. distributors' domination of the Canadian theatrical film mar-

ket as a result of which only two per cent of screen-time in Canadian theatres is occupied by Canadian films.

In subsequent speeches, Masse noted repeatedly that

AT PRESSTIME Wilson tables budget

OTTAWA — With \$75 million for the arts in Finance Minister Michael Wilson's Feb. 26 budget, the Conservatives are putting back the amounts they slashed just over a year ago.

The money includes a \$33 million fund for production and distribution of Canadian features, \$13 million for book publishing, \$5 million for the recording industry, and \$10 million for Canada Council grants, plus an additional \$14 million for royalties for Canadian authors and improvements in Public Archive and library services.

"It is another indication of the government commitment to help culture," commented Communications Minister Marcel Masse, who said he was very pleased "given all the circumstances."

Initial reaction from the Canadian film industry was positive. *Cinema Canada* will have more detailed reaction to the budget announcements next issue.

Canada produces more films than the Canadian public is given an opportunity to see. For example, in 1984 Canada's per capita film output was twice that of the U.S. In the decade from 1972-1982, the number of Canadian production companies jumped from 139 to 322. Now 35,000-strong, the Canadian film industry is producing over 75 feature films per year.

Yet if Canadian films are rarely seen by Canadians, it's not because Canada is an insignificant market. On the contrary, Canada represents about one-quarter of the total world market for U.S. film and TV output. In 1984, Canadian filmgoers paid for more than 100 million admissions to theatres, considerably higher, for example, than Britain with 60 million entries and 2.5 times the population. As Masse noted, the consumer market for film and video in Canada is just under \$1 billion, with over 90% of Canadian distribution profits flowing back to the U.S.

But with only two per cent of Canadian screen-time available to Canadian production, "we face a serious industrial problem" that has "disconcerting" economic and cultural implications, Masse told an industry conference in Toronto Feb. 24. However, he went on, "I am proud that we have now

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Telefilm reorganizes into Entertainment and Corporate

TORONTO — Following weeks of discussions since last November in Montreal, Toronto, and western Canada with associations of producers and distributors, Telefilm Canada has entered 1986 considerably re-organized. The spirit of the revamp, say Telefilm officials, is to make the federal agency more responsive to the film industry.

The structure of the re-organization, announced Jan. 17 by Telefilm board chairman Ed Prévost, means primarily that Telefilm's previous French-English/Montreal-Toronto mode of operation is now no more. And where its divisions previously consisted of Administration, Distribution, English Production, and French Production, executive director Peter Pearson has redesigned Telefilm into a bicameral body composed of an Entertainment Business and a Corporate Affairs division. Further, the Entertainment division itself has been divided into Operations and Business Affairs components (each of which is headed by an executive and supported by managers in Montreal and Toronto).

As well, within Operations is the International Services section, which regroups all of Telefilm's exporting, marketing (including the Marketing Assistance Program), and over-

seas support activities and festivals (the latter included because of its role in promoting Canadian culture abroad). Other deletions within Telefilm have removed the posts of director of Marketing and Distribution and director of the Broadcast Fund.

Part and parcel of Telefilm's re-organization are several key personnel changes, among them the following: to deputy director and corporate secretary, Judith McCann (previously secretary of the Board and special advisor); to executive in charge of Operations, André Picard (previously director, production — Montreal and for six months director of the Broadcast Fund); to executive in charge of Business Affairs, Bob Linnell (previously director, production — Toronto); to executive in charge of Strategic Planning, Ian McLaren (previously director, distribution — Montreal); to executive in charge of Communications, Josée Miville-Dechêne; and to executive in charge of Administration, Yves J. Beauchesne (from director, finances and administration — Montreal).

With the aim of increasing Telefilm's responsiveness to the industry, the leading edge will lie in both the Operations and Business Affairs compo-

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MAP marks first year with good sales

TORONTO — Success, both in sales and syndication, has been the fortunate lot for Canadian producers at recent markets abroad, in the U.S. at the Jan. 17-21 NATPE market in New Orleans and in Europe at the Monte Carlo market Feb. 9-15. Both markets, attended by a combined Canadian contingent of over 100, concluded Telefilm Canada's 1985-86 fiscal year and the first year of its Marketing Assistance Program on an upbeat note.

For the one-year period since February 1985, MAP director Margo Raport told *Cinema Canada* that Canadians pulled in over \$13 million Cdn. in sales at international markets — a 300 per cent increase over the previous year. "You're looking at a phenomenal sales record, so we have to be doing something right," said Raport.

Something right carried into the new year at NATPE where,

for the first time, Canada was a unified entry with its own booth and a team numbering 12 Canadian exporters and five producers. NATPE, a syndication market described by Raport as "extremely important" for sellers as well as information and marketing strategies, not only drew Canadian broadcasters buying foreign programming but equally, generated considerable interest in syndication (by non-Canadians, a point Raport felt was immaterial given the sales achieved) of Canadian product.

Precisely what success met Canadians at NATPE was rhymed off in rapid-fire by Raport, highlights that included: the sale in 65 markets covering 40 per cent of the U.S. population of **Rocky Mountain Inn** (represented by Eagle Media); Canadians garnering all three nominations in the international sec-

tion of NATPE's Iris Awards, with programming executive Stan Thomas and CKND-TV of Winnipeg winning for **Tramp at the Door** (Thomas' fifth nomination and his second win in two years); the ordering of more episodes, thanks to excellent ratings, of CTV's **The Campbells** by the Christian Broadcast Network plus sales to Britain, Holland, and the Caribbean; the entry into its fourth year of syndication (represented by Access Syndication) of **Lorne Greene's New Wilderness**, which consists of 84 complete episodes offered on a barter basis and which now has covered 70 per cent of the U.S. market; and the addition of 14 U.S. markets to its coverage south of the border for the CTV series, D.L. Taffner's **Check It Out**.

CBC Enterprises "again did phenomenally well" said

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Ontario announces Film Corp

TORONTO — The Ontario Film Development Corporation, first announced by Ontario Citizenship and Culture Minister Lily Munro last Nov. 1, held its inaugural launch on Feb. 11. The OFDC, chaired by former Festival of Festivals director Wayne Clarkson, has held meetings throughout February with various industry groups (among them the Canadian Independent Film Caucus, Toronto Women in Film and Video, and ACTRA) both to publicize its aims and establish its guidelines.

The OFDC, established with \$20 million in funding to invest in Ontario-based productions over the next three years, also had its organization further fleshed out at the launch with the appointment by Premier David Peterson of a 13-member board of directors. Those individuals, culled from the media and arts community,

include: author/columnist June Callwood; Ontario Stadium Corporation chairman Martin Connell; movie directors David Cronenberg and Norman Jewison; TV producer and Chromavision International and Videoglobe Inc. founder Jacques de Courville Nicol; CHCH-TV general manager Frank DeNardis; Young People's Theatre general manager June Faulkner; True North Records' Bernard Finklestein; Toronto Life publisher Peter Herrndorf; jazz pianist/composer Oscar Peterson; Toronto **Cats** co-producer Tina VanderHeyden; literary agent Lucinda Vardey; and Rogers Cablesystems president Colin Watson.

Clarkson will serve as board chairman during corporation meetings, with directors receiving per diems of \$125 plus expenses for each meeting.



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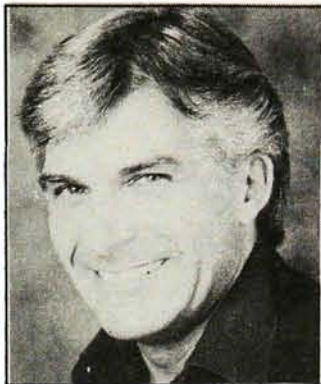
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Tax shelters more attractive for investors in films in '85

OTTAWA – Tax-sheltered investment in film and television production is making a comeback.

Productions worth \$120 million applied to the Canadian Film and Videotape Certification Office for eligibility in 1985. And although that's still appreciably lower than the 1979 high of \$209 million, last year's high was a sharp increase from 1983, when tax-shelter investment bottomed out with films worth only \$38 million applying.

With new provisions announced in September to expand tax-shelter status to productions with broadcast or pre-sale agreements, there's every reason to believe the 1986 numbers will continue to climb.

Previous to last fall's amendments, Revenue Canada would not honour tax-sheltered investment in any production that had secured guarantees from broadcasters or distributors.

Tax-shelters are intended to encourage investment in high-risk areas. Revenue Canada had viewed presale agreements as risk-free investment and would therefore refuse to grant the 100 per cent write-off over two years on investments for any film or program that had secured some type of presale agreement.

Producers were reported to have circumvented the tax laws by securing presale agree-

ments, but not advertising them. Investors would be surreptitiously informed of presales as an inducement to invest. A production could secure shelter status if presales were made after financing was put together.

"The whole point was to get rid of that duplicity," Guy Mayson, a program officer with the Certification Office, told *Cinema Canada*. Mayson says Revenue Canada was convinced by producers that presales do not mean revenue guarantees, but simply a reduction of risk.

"Every broadcaster can turn the product back if they don't like it," Mayson says.

The new provisions were made retroactive to the beginning of 1985 as the federal government struggled with some way to encourage private capital to invest in film production.

With Telefilm Canada and the CBC now major investors in most Canadian films, thanks to the Broadcast Program Development Fund, some estimate as much as 66 per cent of some productions are financed through private investment.

"It's not that attractive a tax-shelter anymore," says Certification Office Chief Carl McMullin. "There's no bandwagon effect."

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Film industry gathers to support report

TORONTO — *Canadian Cinema — a solid base*, the film industry task force report co-chaired by Marie-José Raymond and Stephen Roth that was presented last November to Communications Minister Marcel Masse, was the item of discussion at a two-day symposium Feb. 23-24 at the Sutton Place Hotel. Entitled "Symposium on the Film Industry Task Force Report," the event, intended as an educational process, was organized under the umbrella of the Conference of Producers and Canadian-Owned Distributors.

Kathy Avrigh, executive director of the Association of Canadian Film and Television Producers and one of the organizers, said the symposium was called "to make everyone aware of the provisions in it (the task force report), rally some support behind the report, and hopefully encourage the government to implement it." To that end, besides the

symposium's panel discussions, open sessions, and summation, an invitation was extended to Masse to address the 80-90 invited industry representatives (among such provincial officials as Ontario Film Development Corporation chairman Wayne Clarkson).

Attended by associations that included ACTRA, the Canadian Film & Television Association, the Association des producteurs de films du Québec, and the Association of Canadian Film Craftspeople, the event was organised not only to discuss the film task

force report's motherhood issues. Said Avrigh, "The industry felt it had to get behind the task force report. We felt we had to be more vocal, more unified."

The symposium preceded another meeting, to be held Mar. 4 in Montreal between Masse and his provincial counterparts, that is also to look into the task force's recommendations.

Underlined by the pending free-trade negotiations, Department of Communications senior policy officer Robin Jackson said the ministerial gathering was arranged by Masse in an effort to arrive at a consensus with the provinces or to achieve commitments from them, especially with regard to the question and nature of film distribution within Canada.

Trouble brewing on Quebec's union front

MONTREAL — The Quebec film industry is operating without a collective agreement between technicians and producers, and the situation could last a long time, according to Michel Laveaux, president of the Syndicat des techniciennes et techniciens du cinéma du Québec (STCQ).

The STCQ has been negotiating for three years with the Association des producteurs de films et de vidéo du Québec (APFVQ), and last summer the two negotiating teams concluded a collective agreement. To the astonishment of Micheline Garant who had negotiated for the producers, the APFVQ turned the agreement down, against the recommendations of its own negotiating committee. According to Laveaux, the rejection reflects internal problems at the APFVQ. "The control inside the APFVQ isn't clear. There's no solidarity among the producers: little cliques are working against each other." We are not interested in discussing the producers' counter-proposal and our members have voted overwhelmingly to proceed on a production-by-production basis," he explained.

of the terms of the collective agreement, and production salary scales currently being used are those in the agreement. Outstanding differences centre around the terms of employ-

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Munro to conference won't compromise on cultural sovereignty

TORONTO – Ontario Citizenship and Culture Minister Lily Munro heads for the March 4 Montreal meeting with federal Communications Minister Marcel Masse and provincial counterparts with an open mind. The meeting, arranged by Masse to discuss the various

recommendations of the film industry task force report released last November, is also aimed by Masse at arriving at a consensus with the provinces or leveraging commitments for them, in particular with regard to domestic film distribution and with an eye on possible

Canada-U.S. free trade negotiations.

Underlying Ontario's participation, however, is one particular focus-in keeping with Ontario Premier David Peterson's stated refusal at last fall's Halifax First Minister's Conference to compromise on

Canada's cultural sovereignty for economic gain in those free-trade talks.

"Our one prime thrust is always cultural sovereignty and that general thread is the imperative for us," said David Michener, executive assistant to Munro. Michener, stressing

Ontario's "very anxious" desire to be involved, said the province has yet to establish a position on the film task force recommendations, one prominent thrust of which is Canadian control over domestic film distribution.

By mid-February, Ontario had held no discussions on how it could benefit from a possible re-arrangement of the profits of film distribution, nor had it examined the various means and incentives that could possibly shore up the province's independent distributors. "We have the feeling one would want to look at that area" said Michener.

He added that the possible cross-border ripple effects of whole-hearted endorsement of the task force recommendations had also not been discussed at a ministerial level, Munro and Masse's most recent previous encounter having been a late-January/early-February tête-à-tête to discuss an economic regional development agreement that did not bear on the film industry.

Michener, maintaining "The Minister is concerned about anything that would not be beneficial to Ontario's film industry," said any firm position by Ontario on the film task force recommendations would be arrived at only after discussions with such parties as the board of directors of the Ontario Film Development Corporation, its chairman Wayne Clarkson, and the community.

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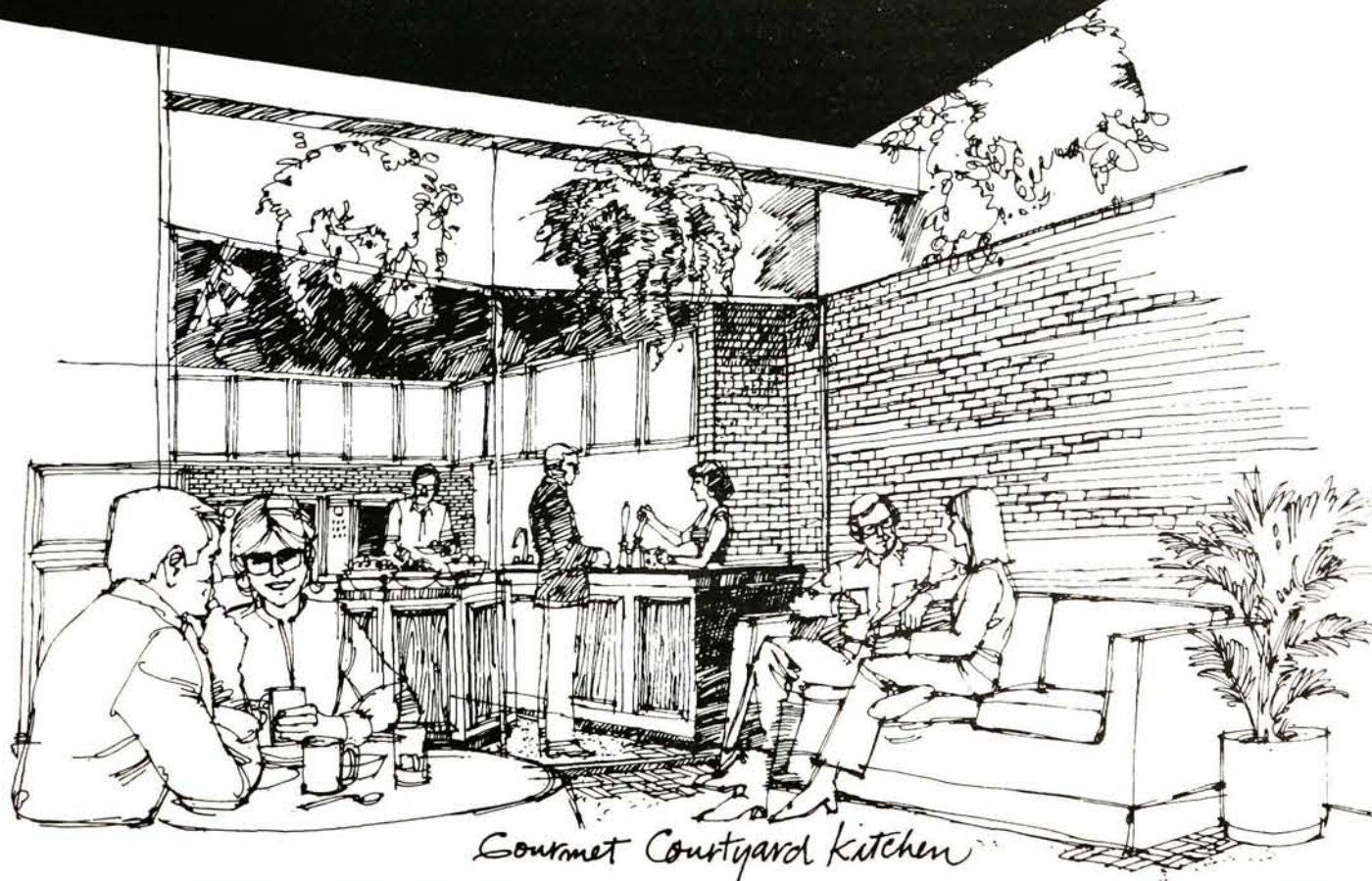
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Quebec union

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ment of apprentices, and the control of the producers' contribution to the union pension-plan. According to sources at the APFVQ, some production houses are having difficulty with the union which has threatened to strike unless its terms are accepted. For the moment, this situation suits the union just fine, says Laveaux. Meanwhile by end February, the APFVQ hopes to begin negotiations represented by a new team.

Meetings are also slated to begin soon among the other Quebec unions which have upcoming negotiations scheduled with the APFVQ, and a federation of trade unions and guilds is in the wind, says Laveaux. The other unions include the Union des Artistes, the Société des auteurs, chercheurs, documentalistes et compositeurs (SARDEC), and the Association des réalisateurs et réalisatrices de films du Québec (ARRFQ).

Masse addresses structural problems

TORONTO — Federal Communications Minister Marcel Masse, appearing as guest speaker at a breakfast meeting Feb. 24 at the two-day Conference of Producers and Canadian-Owned Distributors at Toronto's Sutton Place Hotel, reiterated his support for the recommendations of the Raymond-Roth film industry task force report tabled in December. He also got the support he was seeking from the gathering of the 60 delegates in attendance at the conference, which was sponsored by his department of Communications and Ontario's Ministry of Citizenship and Culture.

Masse, before taking the stand in his first detailed public response to the task force's proposals, was told by conference chairman Ron Cohen that "your film constituency has been able to come to agreement" with those proposals, a consensus Cohen said in particular supported the "repatriation" of Canadian film distribution.

Leading off by recognizing the overall problem in Canada's film industry as a lack of access for Canadians to their

own product and expecting to publish a Green (discussion) Paper by the end of March, Masse told the gathering of the need to develop a new approach and guidelines to redress the current situation. To that end, and claiming that the film industry's future has assumed "its rightful place on the national agenda," Masse told the industry audience his government's approach to the cultural industries needs the support of both consumers across Canada and the provincial governments (in whose jurisdiction he stressed lay responsibility for film distribution).

Masse, after making light of the fact that he could no longer be accused of a lack of consultation, underlined in his bilingual address the importance and "vital role" Canadian distributors have to play in bringing Canadian films to the domestic market and creating a viable industry by returning investment into domestic production. He also, after noting the nearly \$1 billion in revenues generated by Canada's film industry (and the resulting capital drain from it abroad, largely to the U.S.), called for

the recognition of the economic and cultural impact that the "big business" film industry has in Canada, a market which the task force concluded was "fundamentally anti-competitive."

Touching on one of the task force report's key recommendations, the minister noted the "hammer lock" effect exerted by the dominance of vertically-integrated foreign distributors in the Canadian film market (a structural problem derived partially from a lack of restrictions on the operation of the U.S. Majors in Canada over the past 60 years). Pointing out that Canada was not alone in trying to gain access to its own market, Masse added the situation has been exacerbated by the global, one-market strategies of multinational corporations (Gulf & Western, owner of distributor Paramount Pictures and exhibitor Famous Players Ltd. were mentioned).

"The point is we're facing a new generation of problems" said Masse, "so we have to find new solutions, to work together to develop a new approach — otherwise, we will not survive as a distinctive culture." He stressed that in the face of an American society which approached cultural industries with a profit orientation, Canada "will be in trouble" if it fails to have policies that develop public grants to the cultural sector and guard against American initiatives breathing "down our back."

As to how the situation could be turned around, Masse said the issue was as much "investment in our own people" as it was distribution of Canadian product in the Canadian market. With that in mind, Masse said another question is the problem of adding the private money of consumers to Canadian production which, as was noted in the task force report, was marked by a chronic undercapitalization of production companies. As well, addressing the difficulty currently faced in the financing of feature films in Canada, Masse paid regard to one key film task force recommendation with his hope of being able to establish a new "Feature Film Production Fund," access to funding from which would be contingent upon a Canadian distributor holding the rights for the Canadian market (a proviso echoing the guidelines stipulating that Telefilm projects be distributed in Canada by Canadian distributors and which he hoped to persuade his provincial counterparts to apply to their funds).

New combines legislation, aimed at Canada's past difficulties in breaking the vertical integration of distribution and exhibition and the concentration of theatre ownership (a result of the difficult need to prove criminal intent), was also raised by Masse as part of the new approach, citing the announcement last December by Consumer and Corporate Affairs Minister Michel Côté of a new Combines act based on civil, not criminal, prosecution.

Besides believing in the need to continue reviewing foreign investment in cultural industries, Masse spoke of the necessity for the federal and provincial governments to collaborate in harmonising their cultural policies and programs.

Of particular note, Masse said the provinces must accept their constitutional responsibility for film regulations and distribution and stressed that "Not all the answers are on the federal side."

In particular, Masse said he is looking for "cultural leadership" from the provinces on film distribution, vowing to "ensure the provinces take great care to fulfill their own responsibility to the film industry." That won't preclude him however, as federal Communications minister, from working in concert with the provinces (counterparts which he met at a March 4 meeting in Montreal) to solve the problems identified by the film task force.

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Structural problems

In his closing comments, Masse repeated his call for a collective, unified response from the film industry and the communication of their support for the task force proposals to the public at large. Stealing a page from a recent New York speech by the Motion Picture Association of America espousing the "golden rule" of fair trade, Masse finished by noting "what I am working for in Canada is the development of a fair and truly competitive market structure" that he felt could be achieved with the industry and public's support.

While the conference dele-

gates responded to Masse favourably, Ontario Film Development Corporation chairman Wayne Clarkson expressed concern over "what's going to be done in substantial form." Explaining that the responsibility for jurisdiction over film distribution is a very grey area (with reports and current practices suggesting it falls within both federal and provincial orbits), Clarkson

thinks Masse has the will to effect the task force's pivotal proposals on distribution - assuming he has the support of cabinet. And while Clarkson is hopeful of the welcome complement the \$60 million Canadian Feature Film Fund would provide to the OFDC's \$20 million production funding, his expectation of any immediate

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Webb here for Sydney

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA - Canadian filmmakers and producers interested in exposure down under can tap into the 33rd Sydney Film Festival coming up June 6-20. In preparation for that event, Festival director Rod Webb will visit Canada to select films. Primarily, he will be interested in feature films and, to a much smaller degree, theatrical short films (preferably animated and of 15 minutes maximum running time).

Although interested parties were asked to submit their entries in cassette or film (in 16mm, 35mm, or 70mm format) to Telefilm Canada's Montreal head-office before Feb. 21, entries will be accepted until March 31 (with films suggested to arrive in Sydney by May 5 to allow ample time for customs clearance).

Cultural offensive

TURIN, ITALY - Experimental filmmaker Michael Snow will be a focus of this city's Festival Internazionale Cinema Giovanni from March 17-21. The Toronto-born filmmaker was invited to be present for a retrospective of his 12 film works, as well as at conferences dealing with the influence of his work on younger filmmakers. Among the screenings will be such Snow works as *Wavelength*, the three-hour-long *La Region Centrale*, and the more recent *So Is This and Presents*.

Snow's film work (he is also a painter, sculptor, photographer, and musician) was first featured in a 1976 retrospective at New York's Museum of Modern Art. Currently, he's completing a year's worth of work on a holographic installation for this summer's Expo '86 in Vancouver, a 48-piece exhibition entitled "The Spectral Image" set to open May 2.



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NEWS

ACADEMY AWARDS

Every year since 1982, National Film Board productions have been nominated for Academy Awards. This year is no exception. Nominated for Best Animated Short is *The Big Snit*, a comic 10-minute film filled with wacky humour, zany characters, hilarious voices and a multitude of sound effects. The story revolves around a quarrelsome couple whose exasperating habits, manifested during a scrabble game, prompt a domestic squabble. Meanwhile, outside their door, little to their knowledge, another big snit (nuclear war) is underway. Winnipegger Richard Condie, responsible for the story, direction and animation, co-produced the film with long-time friend and veteran NFB producer Michael Scott. This is Scott's second Academy Award nomination. *Whistling Smith* a documentary film he co-directed with Marjorie Canell received an Academy Award nomination in 1976. To date, NFB films have received 51 Academy Award nominations and have won eight Oscars.

THE GENIES

The hit comedy *90 Days*, about the misadventures of two modern men in search of love and happiness, has received a total of six nominations - for best motion picture, best actress (Christine Pak), best supporting actor (Saverio [Sam] Grana), best supporting actress (Fernanda Tavares), best achievement in direction (Giles Walker), and best achievement in film editing (David Wilson).

Two other feature films (*La Dame en couleurs* and *Bayo*) co-produced by the NFB also received nomi-



a scene from *90 Days*

nations. Nominated in the feature documentary category are *Final Offer: Bob White and the Canadian Auto Workers Fight for Independence* and *Waterwalker*. *Final Offer*, produced by the NFB Ontario Studio in association with the CBC, and co-directed and produced by Sturla Gunnarsson and Robert Collison, documents the historic 1984 contract negotiations between the United Auto Workers and General Motors of Canada. *Waterwalker*, a record of a canoe trip along Lake Superior and Ontario rivers made by artist/filmmaker Bill Mason, is an NFB-Imago co-production.

No More Hiroshima, nominated in the short documentary category, is a moving film about two survivors of the 1945 atomic bomb attack on Hiroshima. The film was directed by Martin Duckworth and produced by Jacques Vallée.

In the Best Animated Short category, the NFB is assured of a Genie Award, as all three films nominated are Film Board productions: *The Big*

Snit; *Paradise*, which received an Academy Award nomination last year, was directed and produced by Ishu Patel; and *Sylvia*, a humorous caricature of the modern-day family, was directed by Michel Murray and produced by Yves Leduc. *Sylvia* won a Gold Plaque at the 21st International Film Festival in Chicago in November 1985.

APPOINTMENT

On February 1, Georges Dufaux became the new Director-General of the NFB's French Program Branch, replacing Daniel Pinard. A highly-experienced director and cameraman, Dufaux has worked on more than 30 NFB films and has also been director of photography on several Quebec feature-length films including *Les Beaux souvenirs* and *La Femme de l'hôtel*.

FILM COMMISSIONER MEETS WITH FREELANCE FILMMAKERS

Government Film Commissioner and NFB Chairman François N. Macerola is meeting with groups of freelance filmmakers across the country to discuss their specific needs and aspirations, and the role of the NFB in the Canadian film industry. In February, Mr. Macerola met with Winnipeg and Edmonton filmmakers and in March, he will meet with members of the film community in Halifax, Vancouver and Montreal. While in these regions, Mr. Macerola will also meet with the various provincial ministers and government officials concerned with cultural affairs, filmmaking, and education.

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Masse initiatives

cont. from p. 32

placed it squarely on the public record and on the national agenda, because it is only with the support of Canadians and their governments that we can change the situation."

On the national agenda, legislative initiatives include a Green (discussion) Paper this spring that will present to cabinet over-all policies for Canada's cultural industries that could include a new Cinema Act to Canadianize film distribution as well as a \$40-60 million feature film production fund or investment bank, and changes in combines

legislation to reduce American ownership in Canadian cultural industries.

Also on the national agenda is the harmonizing of federal and provincial policies and programs related to theatrical licensing and regulation. To that end, a meeting of federal and provincial ministers of culture in Montreal Feb. 27-28 is to be followed March 3-4 with a federal-provincial sectoral conference on the film and publishing industries.

A more perplexing problem facing Masse concerns generating the support of Canadians for his initiatives. *Cinema Canada* learned that the travel costs for gathering 60 delegates from 10 Canadian film in-

dustry associations for the Toronto conference held Feb. 23-24 were paid by Masse's department (along with some sponsorship from Ontario's Ministry of Citizenship and Culture).

Masse told the assembled delegates that "producers and distributors must set aside the differences which may exist between them, and speak with a single voice," adding "On that, you have made progress."

The Toronto gathering was held to drum up industry support for the Masse-commissioned Roth-Raymond task force report released in December whose analysis of 'foreign' domination of film distribution in Canada Masse

termed "chilling."

If task force co-chairman Marie-José Raymond found an "astounding consensus" among the conference delegates, that consensus was largely among producers united by the prospect of a \$60 million feature production fund, says Quebec technicians' union president Michel Laveaux.

"We contributed a necessary note of discord," Laveaux told *Cinema Canada*. He was in Toronto representing the Quebec technicians' union, the STCQ; the Quebec directors' association, the ARRFQ; and the writers and composers of the SARDEC. "But we are neither consulted nor are we part of the decision-making

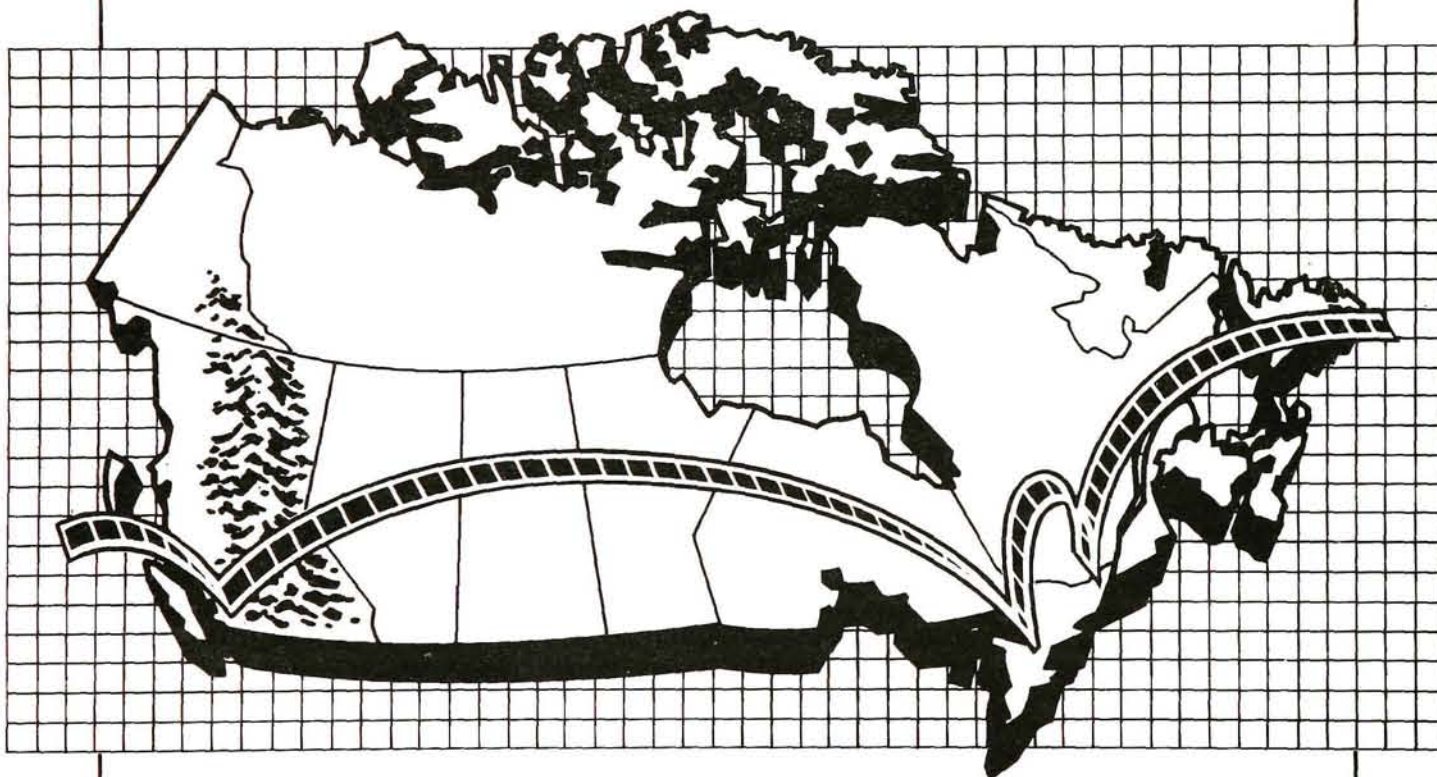
process," Laveaux observed, "and yet we represent the talent, the actors, actresses and technical people, and without us there's no industry at all. So we think we should be given the same consideration that's given producers and distributors in this industry."

Specifically, Laveaux reiterated the unions' long-standing beef against Telefilm (and the CFDC before it) of having no voice on industry consultative committees.

Laveaux's demand for a place in the industry sun was echoed by Gratien Gélinas on behalf of the Quebec Union des artistes, and film composer Louis Applebaum, co-author of the 1984 Applebaum-Hébert Royal Commission Report on the arts and cultural industries.

Department of Communications assistant deputy minister Jeremy Kinsman, representing Masse, also suggested a greater union voice in the over-all consultative process.

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Ron Mann retrospec

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH - Independent Toronto filmmaker Ron Mann had four of his films presented for viewing during the U.S. Film Festival in January. Mann, serving on the documentary jury of the Sundance Institute-sponsored festival for American independent films, was highlighted in a four film retrospective that included his 1981 *Imagine The Sound*, 1983's *Poetry In Motion*, 1984's *Listen To The City*, and the five-minute-long 1985 production, *Marcia Resnick's Bad Boys*. Mann currently is at work on two documentaries; the first, tentatively titled *The Comic Book Film*, will look at the North American history of comics and feature some well-known artists while the second will document Ivan Reitman's making of the film *Legal Eagles*.

1 000 for the Journal

TORONTO - *The Journal*, CBC-TV's prime-time current affairs program, achieved a milestone on Jan. 21 with its 1,000th broadcast. Since its first telecast four years ago Jan. 11, 1982, *The Journal* has been tuned into by average audiences of more than 1.5 million Canadians during its 10:22 p.m. weeknight time slot. *The Journal*, under executive producer Mark Starowicz, achieved its highest-to-date audience last June when an average 2.47 million Canadians viewed its report on the Atlantic crash of an India-bound Air India jet.

Peanut Butter Solution caught in American Christmas crunch

MONTREAL – In the wake of the largest launch ever in Canadian film history, Les Productions La Fête president and **The Peanut Butter Solution** executive producer Rock Demers is now certain: you can't launch a Canadian film on Canada's theatre screens at Christmas.

After opening early last December on over 60 Cineplex Odeon screens across Canada, **Peanut Butter** in four weeks grossed a grand total of \$75,000 in English Canada. Meanwhile, in Quebec, the film's French version, **Operation beurre de pinottes** topped the \$300,000 mark at the box-office, as crowds flocked to see Michael Rubbo's first comedy feature.

"In terms of English Canada, it just didn't work," Demers told *Cinema Canada*. "And that's categorical. You just can't release a Canadian film in English Canada at Christmas.

"Which is what people in the industry have always said, so we were aware of that. But we had to take the risk.

"We had everything going for us: the largest promotion ever (though a drop in the bucket by American standards); we had the Odeon bookers behind us; we were behind it; and we had the film itself.

"But it's just not possible. It's impossible to take on the Americans at Christmas, not when you're up against films like **101 Dalmatians**, **Young Sherlock Holmes**, or **Santa Claus the Movie**.

"Well, we tried. We had to. And we'll never try it again."

As with his earlier hit, **The Dog Who Stopped The War**, which eventually went on to become Canada's top-grossing film, Demers says his next features in the Films For All series, of which **Peanut Butter** was the second, will henceforth be released in October or March.

Peanut Butter, Demers told *Cinema Canada*, will be re-released in English Canada in late February-early March.

Meanwhile in the U.S. **The**

Dog Who Stopped The War had been pursuing a respectable and increasingly widening release pattern until it too was blown out of the water by the U.S. Majors' Christmas releases. "We were up to 60 copies of

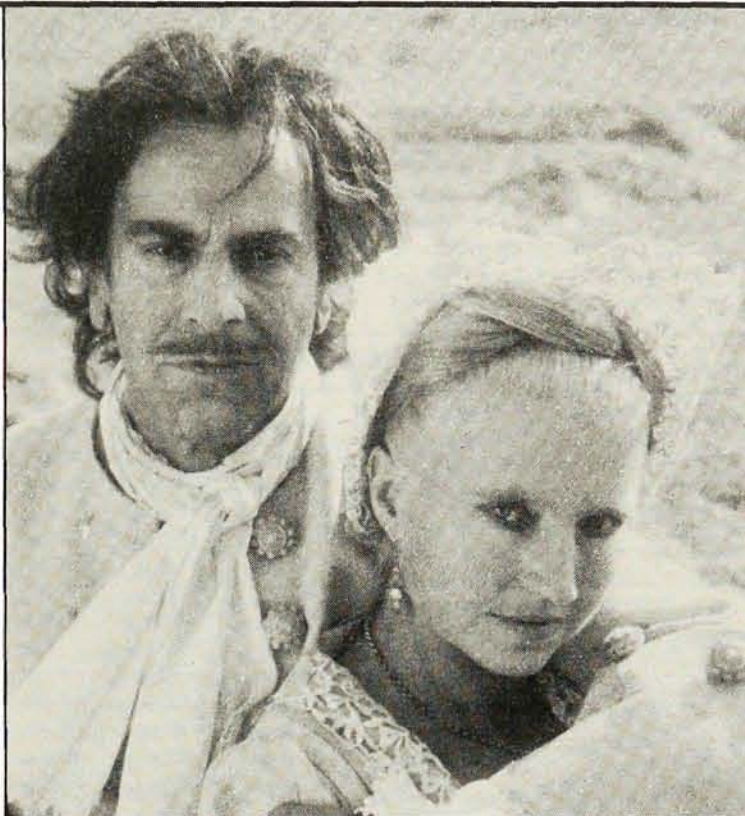
the film, and hitting the Midwest, then, literally from one weekend to the next, the film, which had been doing \$3-4,000 a week per theatre suddenly plummeted to \$75," says Demers, confident that

U.S. distribution would pick up again at the end of January.

"If a film like **One Magic Christmas** could make it through the Christmas period, it's only because it had the magic of the Disney name on

it," Demers says.

And as proof of **Peanut Butter's** viability, Demers reveals he's considering two offers from two U.S. Majors – one for worldwide video rights, the other for universal rights.



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VANCOUVER – The CBC, after accepting an invitation from federal Transportation Minister Don Mazankowski, will serve as host broadcaster for the upcoming Expo '86. During the transportation/communication exposition's May 2-Oct. 13 run, the CBC will provide domestic and foreign broadcasters live audio and video signals of major Expo '86 events, as well as arranging all coverage requirements for foreign broadcasters.

MAP hits mark

cont. from p. 32

Raport, with sales for syndication of half-hour episodes in four series; 13 of **Vid Kids**, 65 of **King of Kensington**, 130 of **The Beachcombers**, 32 of **Seeing Things**, and 94 of **Hangin' In**. NATPE, at which Canadian product was represented by exporters that included Isme Bennie International, Via Le Monde, Ralph C. Ellis Enterprises, The Production Group, Thomas Howe Associates of Vancouver, Visual Productions 80 Ltd., Filmopation, William F. Cooke TV Programs, Atlantis TV, Ironstar Communications, and Cinevisa (which generated interest in its pre-sales offerings of **Max Haine's Crime Flashbacks**, was also marked by appearances from Wendy Wacko Productions Ltd (which the BBC in association with CTV, producers of the **Mountain Men** trilogy), Laurence Carota and East In Motion Pictures with their CBC pilot (the first sitcom pilot from the east coast, said Raport) **Getting to Work**, and, on a U.S. sales exploration foray, Caryl Brandt of the Alberta Motion Picture Development Corporation.

At Monte Carlo, meanwhile, Canadians continued to fair very well in that market (where sales openings are made, to be closed in April at MIP-TV in Cannes), especially with a strong English-language presence. "Canada's always been there," said Raport, "but not with the strength and product of the past two years" derived largely from the support of Telefilm's Broadcast Fund.

Raport, viewing the first European sales market at

Monte Carlo as "probably the most important to Canadian sellers," estimated that sales from the eight Canadian companies participating would exceed \$800,000, a figure that would translate into actual dollars within a year's time.

For its part, the best-ever appearance at Monte Carlo by Canadians was marked by the following; the complete, world-wide sales of the second series in Atlantis' **Bradbury Theatre**; the excitement generated by **Peter Ustinov's Russia** (with deals to be closed at MIP-TV, with Ustinov himself an official guest of the market); the wrapping up of several territories by the Peter Ustinov/Patrick Watson-narrated **The World Challenge/Le Défi mondial** (for which producer Daniel Bertolino fêted buyers to a dinner); the favorable reception accorded Montreal-based Film Transit's **Ô Picasso**, a Gilles Carle documentary; a big sale by Montreal's Filmoptions of its **Company of Adventurers** to National Geographic; the sale of 20 made-for-TV movies by Visual Productions 80 Ltd. in several territories; the exceptional sales reception accorded the NFB's **90 Days**, and CBC Enterprises sale to several territories of **Vid Kids**, **Danger Bay**, and **Canada's Sweetheart: The Saga of Hal C. Banks**.

Other Canadian showings at Monte Carlo included the announcement by Atlantis Film of its Norwolf Film Corporation with Farley Mowat and its planned six hour-long documentary episodes on the world's Arctic regions; the availability of Spirit Bay Productions' half-hour productions; the debut of its just-com-

pleted science-fiction fantasy **The Body Electric** by Crawleys International; and the presentation of the CBC Atlantis series **Airwaves** to favorable attention.

Enthused by Canada's showing at both markets, Raport said "We tried to put an accent on product and I think we did very well." Pointing out that MAP's contribution of \$600,000 Cdn. generated approximately \$600,000 U.S. in free promotion and international exposure, Raport optimistically summed up the essence of Canada's experience at markets abroad. "We are out there selling our product and others are selling our product - and that product is making money!"

TORONTO - Effective as of March, Bellevue Home Entertainment Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Toronto distributor Astral Bellevue Pathe Inc., will become the exclusive Canadian distributor for the products of Walt Disney Home Video (including release Disney's Touchstone label). Astral Bellevue will also provide all Canadian video duplication services for Walt Disney Home Video.

TORONTO - Harbourfront, the federal housing and commercial development that concluded a six-day contemporary retrospective of Basque Cinema on March 2 is taking a turn north and to the Nordic. Running from March 10-16 at the Studio Theatre, the screening of Contemporary Swedish Cinema will offer (complete with English subtitles) 11 feature films by different directors.

NANBA nominates Wedge to v.p. post

OTTAWA - Philip Wedge, vice-president and director of programming for the CTV Network, has been named by the North American National Broadcasters Association to serve as one of its two vice-

chairmen for a two-year period. Wedge's appointment was part of a new slate of officers selected in January by the Ottawa-based NANBA, a body established in 1978 and which represents seven national networks - America's ABC, CBS, NBC, and PBS, Canada's CBC and CTV, and Mexico's Televisa.

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Back to "Go" in Quebec

QUEBEC CITY — It's back to the drawing board for Quebec's controversial Cinema Law following a cabinet decision Feb. 4 to hold another round of public hearings in the hope that positions have changed since the PQ government, under American pressure, decided not to proceed with the law's distribution regulations.

The procedure entails republishing the law's regulations in the official *Gazette du Québec*, after which public hearings would be held to determine whether or not the regulations meet industry expectations. No precise time-frame for the procedure has been determined. Quebec Cultural Affairs ministry spokesman Antoine Godbout, told *Cinema Canada*, adding that he hoped any outstanding difficulties could be resolved "in the next few months."

The last round of public hearings, held in September, saw complete unanimity across the Quebec industry in support of tough controls in favour of Canadian-owned distribution companies. Objections to the regulations came

either directly from representatives of the U.S. Majors, their Canadian representatives in the Canadian Motion Picture Distributors' Association, and the now one-third American-owned Cineplex Odeon Corp. of Toronto.

Godbout told *Cinema Canada* that Quebec Cultural Affairs minister Lise Bacon was in the process of appointing a two- or three-member working group who would negotiate with the American Majors what Godbout termed "a minimum of concessions" from the Quebec side.

"We have reason to believe that the Americans have modified their position (since September)," Godbout told *Cinema Canada*, adding that the purpose of the hearings would be to hear counter-proposals from the U.S.

"So here we go again," Godbout concluded, adding that "We have every interest in bringing this dossier to a close as soon as we can."

Bravo buys Tapestry's Maggie and Pierre

TORONTO — *Maggie & Pierre*, the 90-minute TV adaptation of actress Linda Griffith's stage satire of Margaret and Pierre Trudeau, has been bought by the CBS-owned Bravo pay-TV network. The work of producer Rick Butler and Tapestry Productions, *Maggie and Pierre* stars Griffiths and completed production in January of 1984. Bravo, an arts network reaching 400,000 U.S. households, will begin showing *Maggie and Pierre* 15 times this May.

"As soon as they (Bravo officials) saw the show, they de-

cidied they wanted it, so we're pleased about that" said Butler. Butler, describing the Bravo purchase as a "moderately-priced sale," said *Maggie and Pierre* departed from other productions in which the original stage play was filmed live for television. Instead, Tapestry Productions re-designed the show for television, building 13 new sets and then filming the play to make it, says Butler, "fresh and completely new for TV."

Originally produced for First Choice pay-TV (where it aired February, 1984), *Maggie and*

Pierre was also shown twice last fall on TVOntario and this January on the Global TV Network. As well, by April, it will get a national release on videocassette by Pan-Canadian.

Kelly leaves Spectra

TORONTO — Virginia Kelly, director of advertising and publicity for distributor Spectrafilm since May, 1983, has made a move outward to broaden her horizons.

Since Feb. 1, Kelly has been on a free-lance basis for the Toronto-based company, for which she is contracted to do all its corporate film publicity. Recently, she has also been working in association with publicist Donald Martin's Promotional Yours firm on the feature film, *The Return of Billy Jack*.

Kelly, with her newly-formed company VK & Associates, has another iron in the works with her representation of Susan DePoe's Creative Technique, a two-year-old company whose 17 clients encompass craft skills from cinematographers to stuntmen.

Drabinsky takes gospel to L. A.

BEVERLY HILLS, CALIF. — Garth Drabinsky, Cineplex Odeon Corporation president and chief executive officer, appeared as guest speaker at a Feb. 27 luncheon at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel entitled "The Canadian/American Cultural Dilemma: Between Friends." Drabinsky, since last fall also the chairman, president, and CEO of the Plitt Theatres Group, is a member of the Canada California Chamber of Commerce and

was to have spoken on the sensitive issues in the bilateral relationship in light of the tentative free-trade negotiations.

The \$25-per-person luncheon was hosted by both Cineplex Odeon and the Plitt Theatres Group. Sid Sheinberg, president and CEO of MCA Inc. and one of the new directors on the Cineplex board following January's share acquisition agreement between MCA and Cineplex Odeon, was on hand to introduce Drabinsky.

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Telefilm changes

cont. from p. 32

nents. The respective executives, André Picard and Bob Linnell, point out the re-organisation's intent is to provide a quicker response (particularly of the "No" variety) to applicants for Telefilm assistance. While the application process itself remains a four- to six-week process, the enhanced responsiveness is also designed to ensure what Picard calls a "more complete 'Yes'."

Within the revised scheme of things, Operations' mandate will consist of evaluating the quality of all financing requests, which says Picard will include examination of script-development, production and distribution arrangements and, in a bid to lead more producers to think of sales at the outset, export and marketing programs. Despite his view that Telefilm "already has a well-oiled machine," Picard says the essence of the re-organisation is that, on a managerial level, there will be direct contact with producers and distributors.

That contact, a "close and open dialogue" (which includes broadcasters) is viewed by Picard as a first priority. Ob-

serving that the application process previously failed to address the principal points supporting the quality of productions (script, past track-record, success in distribution, crew), he added that Telefilm's focus would be on identifying "the best and most important projects," while still taking some risks and being more responsive to the film and television industry.

Other items on which accent will be placed, says Picard, include: trying to find markets for French-language productions; assisting distributors in establishing an independent base in Canada for their product; establishing a base for Canadian products abroad (central to which is a continuation of the MAP effort, whose volume has doubled in the past two years, as noted Picard); and endeavoring to be what Picard described as "creative and open" to private initiatives. As to the future, Picard hopes the agency has gained some maturity over the past two years of the Broadcast Program Development Fund and that it will stand Telefilm in good stead over its next two years.

Still unchanged within Operations, Telefilm's regional of-

ices in Halifax and Vancouver will continue to report respectively to Montreal (whose manager was to have been named later in February) and Toronto (where Donna Wong-Juliani, former co-ordinator of Western projects in Vancouver, has been appointed manager).

Business Affairs' Bob Linnell, charged with the responsibility of negotiating and administering all corporate contracts, says Operations will always be Telefilm's "front door." Echoing Picard's comments about streamlining the application process, Linnell says once Operations has assessed the merits of a project (primarily on its content, from a less extensively prepared application than was previously required), it is then passed on to Business Affairs for an examination of its business aspects or "down-back function." The effect, after perusing each project in the same detail previously used, will ensure a more final 'Yes' or 'No' decision.

Linnell, in effect in charge of

every financial transaction and a budget of \$60 to \$70 million for the 1986-87 fiscal year (beginning April 1, 1986), says the re-organisation's thrust is to generate "decent production." Crucial to that aim, says Linnell, are whether projects submitted to Telefilm are of good quality, financially sensible, and have a market. While he noted Telefilm "theoretically should do projects that are 10 out of 10" and that the re-organisation should crystallize that, he did note the agency would "never do something just because a deal is good."

Accounting for that, in part, are three priorities for Linnell. The first, an investigation into how to financially strengthen the Canadian production industry's "underlying fiscal solidarity," aims to alter the previous 'project by project' nature of production. To avoid the traditional 'boom and bust' cycle, Linnell says production companies need to be on a true, business-like basis. Thanks to the market-driven instrument Linnell sees in the

Broadcast Fund, that evolution is underway.

Second is one of his highest priorities: finding another \$100 million for the Broadcast Fund to direct towards production. Noting that Telefilm investments have averaged around 30 per cent in projects, Linnell admits this will be a hard objective to meet (since \$74.9 million was spent by the Broadcast Fund in fiscal 1985-86, with \$60 million available for the upcoming fiscal year).

Linnell's third priority, what he calls the "house-keeping," is the streamlining of documents so as to simplify the decision-making process and facilitate Telefilm investment. This includes an improved administration of contracts, simplifying both reporting procedures and getting returns by Telefilm.

Backing up Linnell in Montreal and Toronto respectively are managers Francine Forest and Gwen Iveson. Although not yet bilingual, Linnell says he's getting there, thanks to his fairly frequent shuttle trips to Montreal.

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SHOOT ALBERTA

by Linda Kupecek

The 12th Annual AMPIA Awards take place Saturday, March 8, at the Chateau Lacombe in Edmonton. Hosted by the Alberta Motion Picture Industries Association (AMPPIA), the awards honour the best of Alberta film and video and are broadcast live in Alberta on CBC Television.

Locations Unlimited, a nine-minute film spotlighting locations in the Calgary area, is available on cassette to interested producers. Produced and assembled by Bob Willis of On/Film Productions Ltd. (and the now inactive Canawest) the promo was commissioned by the City of Calgary. **Locations Unlimited** was screened Feb. 5 at a small reception for city officials and film industry representatives, with good response to the film despite an unfortunate social faux-pas by film commissioner David Crowe, who illustrated the need for some consciousness-raising seminars among city bureaucrats. However, the film should sell the city as a location site nationally and internationally.

Willis credits stunt-coordinator and location manager John Scott with initiating the project nine months ago, which resulted in the assembling of 19 years of stock footage relating to films shot in Calgary, from 1972's **Prime Cut** to 1985's **Rad**, with director Hal Needham singing the praises of the city.

The same John Scott has used his Midas touch on the wheel of fortune. Not only did he win the doorprize (a 2400 cellular telephone) at a gigantic wrap party held in Vancouver Jan. 25, but he returned to Calgary to win the football pool on the **Hoax** set in Banff. Next stop is Vancouver again as stunt coordinator on the Perry Mason series.

Hoax, the CBS television mystery movie starring Mike Farrell, Elliot Gould and Margot Kidder, has ended a quick and oh-so-quiet three-week shoot in Banff. David Greene directed for producers and writers Richard Levinson and William Link...Shona Rossel of Passion Inc. has finished shooting

Close to the Heart, a half-hour documentary about Dr. Christine Meikle, a pioneer in developing social and educational changes for the mentally handicapped. The \$40,000 independent production is in-

deed close to Rossel's heart, for she is Meikle's granddaughter. Next for Rossel is a two-hour documentary, **Canadian Women, Canadian stories**, eight portraits of diverse Canadian women... Martin Kinch, CBC producer turned artistic director of Theatre Calgary, is under fire from critics and audiences for his recent productions of **Alice** and **Uncle Vanya**...Don Truckey, last year's ACTRA Award winner

for best television script for **Rough Justice**, has a **Seeing Things** script in his future...Peter Campbell of the Dreamland Picture Company is working with Vancouver writer Michael Mercer on **Hail Alley**, an adventure feature racing to a 1986 shoot...Peter Haynes and Jorge Montesi have reason to smile as **Sentimental Reasons**, their low-budget feature, has opened at the Cineplex in Edmonton, and

Birds of Prey, their second effort, will soon be available in final print...Allan Stein of AMPPIA was one of the participants at the Telefilm-sponsored producers' think tank at Montebello in January...Peter Campbell has been chosen to direct a three-minute comedy for the Alberta Pavillion at Expo '86, written by Fred Keating and Tom Crichton, while Chris Tate, back from Toronto, is editing **Rat Tales**.

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Calgroup escapade has little impact on investors in film securities

TORONTO — Calgroup Graphics Corporation, a Toronto-based company with interests in film properties, mining, and high technology that has been under investigation by the Ontario Securities Commission since last September over the accounting valuation of its financial statements and, in particular, its film properties, proposed Feb. 17 to present a revised package of financial statements that would resolve the OSC's dissatisfaction with Calgroup's previous accounting practices.

Specifically, Calgroup, known as Gowganda Resources Inc. until its January, 1985 acquisition of the business operations of Reid Entertainment Corporation (a transaction which saw Calgroup acquire \$15 million in guaranteed sales for uncompleted films while Reid Entertainment president Donald W. Reid received 10 million common voting shares in Calgroup — or 63% — at \$1.50 each), was taken to task by the OSC over its audited annual report for the year ended March 31, 1985, a financial statement rejected by the commission for not being prepared according to generally accepted accounting principles.

Revised financial statements of last Oct. 11, also prepared by Calgroup's auditor Price Waterhouse (which had accepted Calgroup management's representation on the valuation of the film properties), were also rejected for the same reason.

Now, in the latest appearance by Calgroup before the OSC (which, incidentally, had originally placed a cease-trading order on Calgroup shares last Sept. 23 and successively extended that order through to the end of last November),

Boisvert absent

MONTREAL — For the second month, Nicole Boisvert has been absent from her post as executive director of the Société Générale du Cinéma. At the SGC, Boisvert's office reports only that her absence is for medical reasons, and is unable to suggest a date at which she is expected to return.

Brown to Telescene

MONTREAL — Jamie Brown, author of the screenplays for *Keeping Track* and *Toby McTeague*, has joined Telescene Productions Inc. as head of development. There he will act as producer and writer in addition to his development work.

company lawyer Robert Faldy proposed an eight-point package to be presented to the commission by Feb. 26.

The package proposals, which followed the failure of Calgroup to negotiate a resolution of disagreements with the OSC staff during a recent five-week adjournment, include: the withdrawal by Calgroup of its March 31, 1985 year-end financial statements and a June 30, 1985 pro forma statement; the withdrawal of its Oct. 11, 1985 revised financial statement; the presentation of new financial statements to the year-end at March 31, 1985, stating the reasons for the withdrawals of those previous statements and, more significantly, the reflection in the new statement of the film assets down to a nominal value of \$1.00 — indicating an asset does exist but effectively writing it off — with an explanation of that treatment; the presentation of second and third-quarter statements for 1985; statements of fact providing "full disclosure" for previously issued Calgroup statements Faldy said "might be misleading," especially regarding the nature of the film transaction, a transaction with another party, Midata Management Corp. of Chicago (which gave Calgroup a \$7.1 million promissory note in exchange for interests in five unfinished films and 800,000 Calgroup shares), and the nature of the film properties themselves, their current status, and their financing.

As well, other provisions of the package were: background on Donald W. Reid's involvement in the film business; an information package on everything above to be sent to Calgroup shareholders, as well as discussion of shareholder protection arrangements with OSC staff; and the arrangement of a meeting with shareholders to approve Calgroup's film transaction with Reid Entertainment Corporation.

In that latter clause, if shareholders disapprove of the film transaction, both Reid Entertainment and Calgroup will rescind the deal.

The Feb. 17 hearing featured an attempt by Price Waterhouse lawyer Brian Morgan to prevent OSC staff from calling a final witness. Paul Cherry of the chartered accounting firm Coopers & Lybrand, whose evidence cited the lack of documentation in the Calgroup files, the generally "poor" quality of the Price Waterhouse audit, the lack of information relating to concerns about the film properties, the lack of external evi-

dence in the March 31, 1985 audit, and Price Waterhouse's reliance on Calgroup management representations in that particular document.

The hearing was also marked by OSC associate general counsel Joseph Groia's disagreeing with Morgan that agreement had been reached on the March 31, 1985 audit. Groia, advising the OSC panel that commission staff "certainly won't be agreeing to any settlement," told panel chairman Stanley Beck that acceptance or rejection of Calgroup's third set of financial statements would be entirely in the panel's hands.

In terms of the film properties, which OSC staff have argued should be written down to a \$2 million valuation while a third-party produced by Calgroup values them at up to \$20 million, an August 1, 1985 Calgroup letter to shareholders maintains the value of the 17

film sales contracts at \$15 million. That letter noted that delivery of film negatives for all 17 contracts was scheduled for between last December and this June, contracts which Reid

Chartwell Productions Inc., (one of three Reid divisions acquired by Calgroup) had as of June 30, 1985 and which consisted of 15 co-productions

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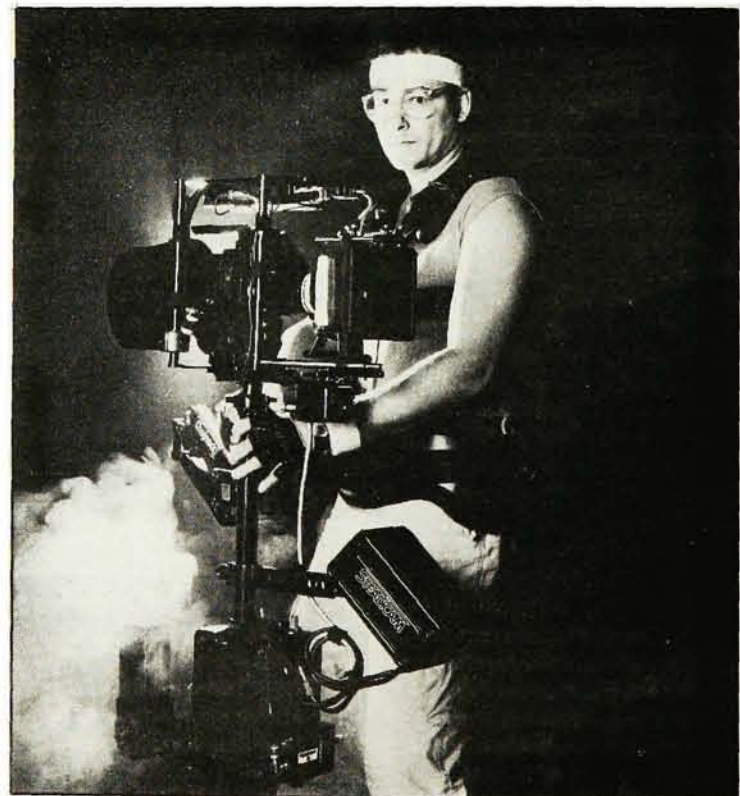
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and two company-owned productions.

The 17 contracts, sales and net revenues from which were not taken into income and which didn't recognize profits up to the period ending last June 30 (according to Calgroup chairman and CEO Richard Ball in a Sept. 10, 1985 news release), were exclusive of two feature films, *Salvador* and *Dreams of Gold*, acquired by Calgroup in the transaction and which were said to have respectively completed principal photography and post-production by last Sept. 10.

Some items of note connected with Calgroup's interest in those film properties is that while they are listed under the current assets of its March 31, 1985 consolidated balance sheet with a \$15 million value, the company's consolidated statement of operations for the first quarter ended June 30, 1985 lists Film under the revenues column but with no value attached at all.

This is perhaps explained by the paragraph in the August 1 letter to shareholders, which notes: "Based on Revenue Canada and previous auditor direction, it has been the policy of the Reid group to accrue development costs, revenue, and net income attributable to incomplete productions which have been sold, with guaranteed net income sales in place, as of the date of the signing of the contracts."

One witness who gave evidence at a Jan. 8 hearing between Calgroup and the OSC, chartered accountant Al Rosen, agreed with the commission's assertion that the audit of Calgroup's March 31, 1985 year-end financial statement wasn't prepared according to generally accepted accounting principles. Rosen, a York University professor and adviser to the federal Auditor-General, also took issue with the company's \$15 million valuation on the 17 guaranteed sales contracts for unfinished films, describing their inclusion on financial statements as assets amounted to a "serious deviation" from accepted accounting practices.

The Aug. 1 letter to shareholders further explains: "This accounting treatment had the effect of creating an income tax liability well in advance of the receipt of cash income. We are pleased that the Company's auditors, Price Waterhouse, have advised that more recent accounting principle statements make it proper that the Company does not have to recognize revenue, development cost, and resultant profit until film negative delivery, thereby avoiding pre-

ture tax liability."

Following on that letter, meanwhile, was an Aug. 7, 1985, Calgroup news release in which the company reported being unaware of any reason for a drop Aug. 6 in the price of its stock (currently listed on the Alberta Stock Exchange), causing it to request a delay in the opening of trading of its shares until the release of its June 30, 1985 first quarter results.

While the OSC is once again faced with deciding whether to continue extending the original temporary cease-trade order on Calgroup's shares, a sampling of opinion reveals that Calgroup's trials before the OSC are unlikely to deter investors in the Canadian film industry, which has been trying to restore investor confidence in production since the bad-taste left with business from the tax-shelter era.

The general feeling among those familiar with film investment seems to be that while Calgroup's case, if unfortunate given its film connection, is an isolated one and so not likely to have any negative impact or long-term effect on the film industry.

Louis Silverstein, a partner in the Toronto law firm of Silverstein Fisher Kugelmass & Selznick with experience in negotiating contracts and packaging film and TV deals (as well the producer of the feature *Strange Brew*), was uncertain how "this one case of alleged improprieties" would impact on the industry. His speculation, however, was that the Calgroup experience would give investors cause "for more 'due diligence'" in their investment planning.

Silverstein did point out that "investors are cautious already anyway and I don't think this is

necessarily going to make them more cautious. I think we'll have to see how it shakes out in the end, what the OSC is going to do before we can be able to comment on it."

Convinced that the hearings into Calgroup "should have very little effect" is Frank Jacobs, president of Entertainment Financing Limited, a firm providing secured debt and equity financing for feature film and TV program production and previously a principal in the Royal Bank's venture capital arm Roymark Financial Services Limited (for which he developed and had accepted by the Royal guidelines for investment in feature film production).

As to why the film industry will escape unfavorable fallout from Calgroup, Jacobs says that while the Calgroup offering involved film properties, investors weren't buying films so

much as just assets. The issue, Jacobs said, is the valuation of those assets, with what he described as "a major misrepresentation of facts in terms of their valuation" (facts and figures Jacobs observes were accepted as "clean" by Price Waterhouse).

Summing up the Calgroup experience as "very much a suckering thing by a handful of retail brokers with bullchips stories," Jacobs anticipates some reperussion, "but it won't be related to the fact these were film properties. It's unfortunate it was film, but I don't see it will be of any negative consequence." Like Silverstein, Jacobs too hadn't heard of any unfavorable reaction to investment in film production, adding that "Any negative word of mouth would be coming from those who already had it in for the industry."

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Tana, Roy, Létourneau and Dorland top awards at Rendez-vous

MONTREAL – The fourth annual Les Rendez-vous du cinéma Québécois, the week-long showcase of 1985 Quebec film (Jan. 28-Feb. 2), demonstrated once again the filmmaking vitality and creativity that is unique to this country. If the overall quality of the films was more solid than remarkable, the output capacity of the province's filmmakers was prolific. By the time the Rendez-vous wound up in early February, 69 films by 18 directors were screened, including features, shorts, documentaries, videoclips and works of animation.

Opening the Rendez-vous was the Quebec Critic's Association prize for best 1985 film, the \$5,000 L.E. Ouimet-Molson award, which went to Paul Tana's docu-drama *Caffè Italia*. However, another docu-drama, *Passiflora*, directed by Fernand Bélanger and Dagmar Gueissaz-Teufel

and produced by Jacques Vallée and the National Film Board, was generally considered the most adventurous of the films screened.

A theme of the Rendez-vous was a homage to the works of director Gilles Groulx, whose 1961 black-and-white, 28-minute short *Golden Gloves* was screened at the official opening. A sometimes poignant, sometimes humorous look at working-class Montrealers trying to fulfill dreams between the ropes of the boxing ring, *Golden Gloves* remains an extraordinary film 25 years after its creation.

The dénouement to the six days of screenings, debates and discussions were the awards for best short and medium-short films as well as the best critical writing on Quebec cinema. Winning best short was Luce Roy's four-minute animated *Telephone*, while Diane Létourneau's 56-mi-

nute docu-drama *Une Guerre dans mon jardin*, a reconstruction of one of life's many little tragedies, took best medium-short, both prizes awarded by the Quebec Critic's Association.

Cinema Canada associate editor Michael Dorland was the Rendez-vous jury's unanimous choice for his review of Claude Jutra's *La Dame en couleurs* in the March 1985 issue of the magazine.

The award citation by Rendez-vous president Werner Nold lauded Dorland for his sensitive style, his knowledge of Quebec film, his understanding and devotion to the art and his careful analysis of the film. The Rendez-vous is the only Canadian event awarding a prize for critical film writing.

That the prize (a \$1,000 sculpture by environmental artist Pierre Fournelle) went to an English-language cinema

magazine writer is yet another indication of the cultural openness prevailing in Quebec today and in Quebec cinema in particular.

For the second year running, Quebec films in languages other than French were screened and invited critics from New York and Paris were present to take part in the debates and offer an outside perspective on the films. Many Quebec filmmakers are anxious for a response from critics abroad, says Pierre Jutras of the Rendez-vous board of directors. "The directors and artists need an overview from outside the province because a lot of the films are simply not exported," Jutras said.

Some of the films examining Quebec's new polyglossia were *Caffè Italia*, a look at Italian immigration to Quebec and resulting traditions; the lot of Haitians in exile in Tahiti Rached's *Haiti-Quebec*; and the Spanish *La Familia latina* by German Guttierrez.

The Rendez-vous goes back 14 years. For the first 10, as the more ambitious *Semaine du cinéma Québécois* that screened in a large, sparsely at-

tended theatre. After a two-year rethink, it returned four years ago as the Rendez-vous, a more intimate, almost family-like gathering of filmmakers, cinephiles and students.

Funded with \$75,000 in grants from Telefilm, the Société générale du cinéma and the National Film Board, this year's Rendez-vous played to about 60 per cent capacity in the 300-seat theatre at the Cinémathèque Québécoise as well as at the NFB's new theatre at the downtown Complexe Guy-Favreau.

The Rendez-vous' annual bringing together of the province's entire cinematic output is a large effort to redress in a small way the recurring, almost constant plague of the Quebec filmmakers – under exposure. "We don't have a crisis in imagination," explains Rendez-vous president and long-time NFB editor Werner Nold. "We have a crisis in distribution. The big problem is that it's still difficult to see a Quebec film."

Ironically, the very government agencies conceived to

cont. on p. 47

Congratulations Genie Nominations

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Toronto's filmmakers to star

TORONTO — Toronto's film industry is the featured subject of the final episode of the four-part **Trade Secrets** series when it airs Mar. 12 at 7 p.m. on CBLT, Channel 5. The series, designed to provide backstage looks into the industries it examines, presented episodes last fall on Toronto's fashion scene, on journalists, and this February on the music scene.

The last episode, "The Moviemakers," was directed by Bellair Communications president Bob Rodgers and was shot last August. Paul de Silva, executive producer of the series, bills "The Moviemakers" as "a week in the life of the film industry in Toronto, but not the definitive version." In attempting to capture the flavour of the industry's people, "The Moviemakers" offers several vignettes and interviews: visits to the sets of producer/director Kevin Sullivan's **Anne of Green Gables** and Jack Darcus **Overnight**; a visit to the **Night Heat** series set with producer Andras Hamori and supervising producing Robert Lantos; and one amusing sequence where director Rodgers tries to catch Atlantis Films president Michael MacMillan as he dashes into a

limousine and then opts to film Atlantis' Janice Platt — also too busy for an interview — through a window.

Shot largely in Toronto, de Silva says "The Moviemakers" will offer an insight into the making of movies by following various personalities on the phone, where they hang out, and during the all-important business sessions of breakfast, lunch, and dinner (witness Robert Cooper with lawyer Michael Levine or, over lunch at the Bellair Cafe, producers Bill Marshall and Jon Slan).

As well as learning how film deals come about, viewers will be given a view into Toronto's Festival of Festivals and movie publicity, scenes which de Silva says come across naturally thanks to Rodgers' familiarity with his subjects. Currently working on an anthology series, de Silva has also made another appearance on CBLT as executive producer of the recent 13-part **Neighbourhoods** series on Toronto's communities. Among Rodgers credits are **Circle of Two** and **Mr. Patman**, on which he served as associate producer.

The four episodes in **Trade Secrets**, all shot on Beta camera, were estimated by de Silva to have cost 50-55,000 each.

Nice Guy ready for fall release

TORONTO — **Mr. Nice Guy**, the first feature film for Toronto-born producer/writer/director Henry Wolfond and lead actress Jan Smithers of **WKRP in Cincinnati** fame (where she played Bailey Quarters), is in no hurry to get to the big screen. The romance-comedy, shot last October and November in Toronto, is budgetted at approximately \$1 million and is expected to be finished by May (when it's estimated its release print will be available).

Despite the optimistic conviction of all concerned that **Mr. Nice Guy** is a 'hot property', Wolfond says he's turned down offers from several U.S. distributors and will continue to decline making any commitments until the film's completion. "It's a matter of keeping everything together and making the best deal we can get" said Wolfond, in his late 20s, of his first feature endeavour, explaining the cautious, choosy approach is designed to increase interest and, by not tying up its territories too soon, increase the value of **Mr. Nice Guy's** theatrical sale.

A ballpark release date of this fall has been estimated by Wolfond for **Mr. Nice Guy**.

The film's storyline revolves around a romance between a professional assassin (Mr. Nice Guy, played by Nightclub Yuk Yuk's stand-up comedian Mike MacDonald, who also contributed in the script-writing) and Smithers as a beautiful psychiatrist. Meanwhile, in one of the film's twists, the local mob puts a contract out on Mr. Nice Guy as a solution to the business he's cost them.

Likened by Wolfond to some of Woody Allen's early works, **Mr. Nice Guy's** comedic core group also includes work by Yuk Yuk's owner/entrepreneur Mark Breslin on the film's screenplay and former Red Buttons Show straight man and Sid Caesar Show co-star Joe Silver (who, as Lazar Fish, is the free-market killing entrepreneur who takes Mr. Nice Guy under his wing).

Rendez-vous

cont. from p. 46

correct that grievance, Telefilm Canada and Quebec's Société générale du cinéma, were faulted for the generally average quality of the 1985 crop. By promoting and financing films for television broad-

cast, the agencies have helped spawn a play-it-safe attitude among Quebec's traditionally avant-garde filmmakers, says Jutras who also edits the Cinémathèque québécoise's quarterly **Copie Zero**. "They (the filmmakers) are not taking

risks," says Jutras. "For financing you have to convince so many organisations that it will please everyone, that the film ends up not very bad, but never very good."

As a result Quebec cinema tends overall to be of medium

quality. But, as French film critic Luc Moullet discovered to his surprise at the '85 Rendez-vous, it's "the best medium-quality cinema in the world."

David Sherman •

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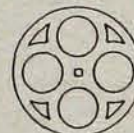
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L E G A L E Y E

by Michael Bergman

Caution to the talebearer

Filmmakers are justifiably concerned that their projects not become a source of expense and damaging litigation. One source which may call for the courtroom affects the activities of most film creative personnel, and that is defamation.

Defamation is bound up with the legal policy of protecting individual reputations. It takes the form of an oral or written statement designed to bring an individual into disrepute, contempt or ridicule. The law of defamation seeks to recompense persons whose character and reputation are wrongly impugned.

In English Canada defamation is divided into two categories, slander and libel. This distinction does not exist in the civil law of Quebec. Traditionally a slander is constituted of oral statements which impute the commission of a crime, incompetency, a "loathsome" disease or even

unchastity. Libel consists of written defamatory statements. Technically the distinction between the two has been blurred such that film, television and radio broadcasts containing defamatory statements are considered as libelous. There is no absolute definition of defamation. Statements may be classified as defamatory or not in different times, societies, contexts, and even with regard to different types of individuals. Even the precise words and their tendencies can fall both ways. Would a phrase such as "How are you, you old horse-thief?" be interpreted as a jovial salutation or an innuendo?

Only a living person may be defamed. There is no recourse to the estate of a deceased against defamation unless provided by local statute. Even fictitious persons such as corporations may be defamed although the scope may be somewhat limited (can a corporation have a "loathsome

disease"?). In all cases defamation must be aimed at an individual who can be identified even if that individual is not named. There is no defamation in simply thinking a nasty thought. The defamation must be communicated even if only to a single individual, and the extent of communication will affect the amount of damages.

The law considers the stringent safeguard against defamation so important that liability for defamation depends not on the intention of the defamer but on the fact of defamation. This is significant for plaintiff in a court-case, will have a less onerous burden of proof to establish the redress he seeks. This strict liability is mitigated to some extent in the case of distributors of defamatory statements; that is, persons or entities who are not the originators of the material but simply communicators or publishers. For these distributors the defence of due care and caution or legitimate ignorance may abide.

A defamatory statement may not necessarily be actionable at law. One of the principal concerns in the law of defamation has been the development of several important defences. The defendant may demonstrate that the defamation was justified either because it was true, for the public benefit or fair comment. The truth speaks for itself if the defamatory statement was not false; if a man has no character to injure, derogatory statements are no more than that. The public benefit is a notion based on freedom of speech. In this defence the concept of some greater public good being served by even a defamatory statement takes precedence over the individual interests the law seeks to protect. Fair comment consists of reasonable assessments of another's comment or activities.

Privilege, whether absolute or relative, is another form of defence. This consists of such matters as statements in the House of Commons or in court proceedings or in reports thereof. The comments between a solicitor and his client is another example. These are defences which recognize that there are certain forums where completely free and uninhibited discussion must take place.

The filmmaker, and particularly the scriptwriter, will be concerned to assure that the content of a production does not cross the boundary line of defamation where scenes relate or reflect on the conduct of real persons. A degree of fairness and propriety that will be the uppermost considerations. It is evident that public figures by virtue of their office

must suffer the criticism that a democratic society considers fair play in politics or by virtue of living in the public eye. Nevertheless, even for public officials, there are limits on the degree of vituperative conjecture that can be made.

Defamation gives rise to two recourses, either damages or injunction. Damages is a sum of money awarded to repair the harm or loss. In many ways the amount is a discretionary matter depending on the extent of communication, the character of the defamed individual and the defamatory statement itself. Injunction is the issue of an order by the court preventing the repeat communication of the defamatory statements or even ordering the destruction or impounding of materials containing same. The violation of such a court order can give rise to a fine or imprisonment.

Needless to say, these recourses, if imposed, could have drastic results on a feature film. It is for this reason that all principal contracts signed for a movie will include warranties that its content will not contain any defamatory material. This is true of not only personnel contracts but completion guarantees and investment agreements. In fulfilling their contractual obligations, per-

sons such as screenwriters and directors will want to be quite cautious that they do not violate this obligation. They can be forced into a court proceeding to take up the producer's defence should the producer be sued for defamation. Creative personnel should also be most reluctant to carry out instructions which may tend to create or perpetuate defamatory statements since their personal liability can be the consequence. This onerous responsibility should also be considered in light of the fact that what may be defamatory in one country may not be in another. Creative personnel will have to display judgment according to a common worldwide denominator to adequately protect themselves.

If any further prod is needed to incite caution one should remember that there is such an animal as criminal defamation, a crime provided for in the Criminal Code.

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

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Joshua meets My American Cousin in annual Genie competition

TORONTO — Following three weeks of screenings in Vancouver, Edmonton, Montreal, and Toronto and voting by the 600 film division members of the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television, the field of candidates has narrowed in the race for the 1986 Genie Awards. At Feb. 13 press receptions in Stop 33 atop Toronto's Sutton Place Hotel and at the Cinemathèque Québécoise in Montreal, 19 films out of 57 were selected for final consideration in the categories of feature films, feature-length documentaries, short documentaries, live-action short-dramas, and animated shorts.

Directors Ken Scott and Fred Jones' **Working Title**.

Not surprisingly animator Richard Condie and producer Michael Scott's **The Big Snit**, which made the running in the Academy Awards' animated

short film category, was chosen in the best animated short category, as were Ishu Patel's **Paradise/Paradis**, and Yves Leduc's **Sylvia**.

Heading the best acting nominations were five selec-

tions each in the best actor in a leading role/best actress in a leading role categories. Nominated for best actor are: as Florent, Serge Dupire in **Le Matou**; as Philip Longlan, Ed McNamara in **Bayo**; as Vla-

dimir Jezda, Alan Scarfe in **Overnight**; as Samuel Lount, R.H. Thomson in **Samuel Lount**; and, as Butch, John Wildman in **My American**



Leading the best film nominations with 12 and 11 nods for personal and technical achievement respectively were producers Robert Lantos and Stephen Roth's **Joshua Then and Now** and producer Peter O'Brian's **My American Cousin**. Fleshing out the best film field are producer David Wilson and producer/director Giles Walker's **90 Days**, producer Justine Heroux's **Le Matou**, and, with his second best film nomination, Peter O'Brian for **One Magic Christmas**. **Le Matou** and **One Magic Christmas** tied with seven nominations apiece, while **90 Days** garnered six for best film.

The feature-length documentary category was pared down from 17 to five, the candidates being producer/directors Brigitte Berman's **Artie Shaw: Time Is All You've Got**, producer Bernard Lalonde's **Le Choix d'Un Peuple**, Sturla Gunnarsson and Robert Collison's **Final Offer: Bob White and The Canadian Auto Workers Fight for Independence**, John Zaritsky's **Tears Are Not Enough**, and Bill Mason's **Waterwalker**.

Up for consideration in the best short documentary category are producer/director Rudy Buttignol's **Neon**, **An Electric Memoir**, producer Jacques Vallee's **No More Hiroshima**, and producer Roman Kroitor's **Skyward**. A surprise in this category was the rejection of Rhombus Media Inc. of Toronto's **Making Overtures — The Story of a Community Orchestra** despite its recent selection as a nominee in the documentary short subject category for the U.S. 58th annual Academy Awards.

Chosen in the best live action short drama category, meanwhile, were producers Paul Caulfield's **The Edit**, Louis-Georges Tetreault's **Pluie d'été**, and producer/di-

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Cousin. Best actress nominations include: as Sandy, Margaret Langrick in *My American Cousin*; as Agnes, Charlotte Laurier in *La Dame En couleurs*; as Hyan-Sook, Christine Pak in *90 Days*; as Elise, Monique Spaziani in *Le*

Matou; and, as Ginnie, American actress Mary Steenburgen in *One Magic Christmas*.

Up for best direction, meanwhile, are five candidates: Jean Beaudin for *Le Matou*; Claude Jutra for *La Dame en couleurs*; Ted Kotcheff for *Joshua Then and Now*; Giles Walker for *90 Days*; and Sandy Wilson for her autobiographi-

cal *My American Cousin*.

Among the personalities receiving nominations who put in an appearance at Toronto's Stop 33 were Peter O'Brian, Michael Scott, John Zaritsky, Lally Cadeau, Christine Pak, Sturla Gunnarsson, and Robert Lantos. Prior to announcing the nominations and the social group encounter sessions that

followed, A.C.C.T. chairman Ron Cohen described the 1986 Genie field as "probably one of the best years" and opined the optimistic view that the Genies would become more of a household word.

Final balloting for the 1986 Genies closes in March, with announcement of the winners March 20 when the seventh

annual presentation ceremonies are held at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, where they will be televised live by the CBC.

ACTRA elects new prez, director

TORONTO — Following meetings by its board of directors on Jan. 25-26, the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television, and Radio Artists has elected Toronto actor Gino Marrocco as its new National President. Marrocco, who succeeds Bruce H. MacLeod in the post, has previously served on ACTRA's board of directors for over 20 years and for the past 12 years as president of its Toronto Performers Branch.

Another notable change in executive personnel at ACTRA was the appointment, effective Feb. 1, of staff-member Garry Neil to succeed Paul Siren as the Alliance's General Secretary. Siren, who has held the post for 21 years, will be retiring at the end of 1986. Neil, for his part, has spent eight years in staff capacities that included national executive director, performers, and national executive director, administration.

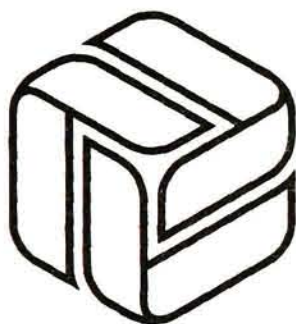
Other appointments for two-year terms to ACTRA's executive consisted of the following: as national vice-president, Ottawa writer Peter Cochran succeeds Alex Barris; as vice-president, performers, Toronto performer Sean Mulcahy succeeds Lyn Jackson; Edmonton writer Pete White becomes vice-president, writers; and as vice-president, broadcast journalist and researchers, Ottawa broadcaster David Mowbray succeeds Dale Goldhawk.

Martin Ritt to Jewison Lectures

TORONTO — Martin Ritt, septuagenarian U.S. director of the currently running *Murphy's Romance*, was the fourth filmmaker to be featured at the University of Toronto's annual Norman Jewison lecture series.

Sponsored by the university's Victoria College and the Cinema Studies Program, the series screened Feb. 10-14, in afternoon and evening sessions, eight of his works dating from 1957; *Norma Rae*, *The Front*, *Hud*, *The Long Hot Summer*, *Sounder*, *Conrack*, *Edge of the City*, and *The Molly Maguires*.

Ritt, who followed directors Jewison, Joseph L. Mankiewicz, and Robert Wise in the lecture series, was on-hand for questions following the afternoon sessions at the Cumberland Theatre, as well as at a closing session Feb. 14 at Victoria College's Alumni Hall.



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Orchestra and Snit nominated for Oscar top prizes

TORONTO — Two Canadian productions have been nominated for the U.S.'s 58th annual Academy Awards on March 24 in Los Angeles. Capturing one of three nominations in the animated short film category is Winnipeg producer/director Richard Condie's acclaimed **The Big Snit**, while Toronto's Rhombus Media Inc. received one of five nominations in the documentary short subject category for its 28-minute film **Making Overtures — The Story of a Community Orchestra**.

For both, the nominations are the latest in a series of accolades. The 10-minute-long **The Big Snit**, produced by Condie and Michael Scott at the NFB's Prairie Region office in Winnipeg, has five recent awards to its credit: Best Short Film at the Montreal World Film Festival; an International Critics Award last year at Annecy, France; a Hiroshima Award at the Hiroshima, Japan, Festival; a silver Prize at last fall's Chicago Film Festival; and the International Critics Award at Zagreb, Yugoslavia.

Making Overtures, for its part, won Best Production and Best Documentary Production under 30 minutes at last fall's 21st Yorkton Short Film and Video Festival, as well as capturing Best Performing Arts Film at the American Film Festival in Athens, Ohio.

Taking three years to produce, **The Big Snit** is also notable for being the NFB's 51st nomination. Previous Oscar winners for the NFB have been eight short action, documentary, or animated films: Stuart Legg's **Churchill's Island** in 1941; Norman McLaren's **Neighbours** in 1953; Co Hoedeman's **The Sand Castle** and Beverley Schaffer's **I'll Find a Way**, both from 1978; John Weldon and Eunice Macauley's **Special Delivery** in 1979; Eugene Fedorenko's **Every Child** in 1980; Terri Walsh and Edward De Lorraine's **If You Love This Planet** in 1983; and Cynthia Scott and Adam Symansky's **Flamenco at 5:15** in 1984.

The announcement of the two nominations, meanwhile, is itself notable for the differing reactions to the news. Condie, admitting to being both camera-and print-shy, feels «over-exposed» by the response being accorded **The Big Snit**. The result is that the modest, tongue-tied Condie «just wants to run away.»

Aware that the Academy was considering his film, Condie is content with the regard shown by the nomination («I'm glad

they like it down there," he says simply). Having seen the other two animated short film entries (**Anna and Bella** and **Second Class Mail**) and considered them «really good," he even charitably wouldn't mind if either of them won.

Currently at work on a project with the NFB and another «tiny work» with IMAX, Condie says **The Big Snit** would never have been realized without Scott's faith in both the film and Condie himself. Still, Condie, despite his self-effacing reticence, and Scott plan to attend the Academy Award ceremonies with their wives. Asked what would happen if **The Big Snit** won, Condie, not surprisingly, remarks «It would come and go; a bit of excitement, and that would be it.»

Conversely, the nomination was at once «shocking and wonderful» at Rhombus, says **Making Overtures** director Larry Weinstein. Weinstein, describing the film as «basically a love letter to a community orchestra» (specifically Cobourg, Ontario's Northumberland Symphony Orchestra and Choir), says that despite home-grown cynicism toward the Oscars, «We're going to have fun with it.»

Weinstein, commenting that Rhombus is something of a low-profile company with an empathy for their subject in **Making Overtures**, reported that orchestra conductor Philip Schaus was «very blasé at first» when told of the nomi-

nation. As Canadians with the more immediate aspirations of a Genie Award nomination, Weinstein says Rhombus Media's **Making Overtures** is «definitely a part of our Canadian experience — we don't try to hide its Canadian-ness.»

The \$60,000 film, a co-production with TVOntario (which put up half the financing, other contributions coming from the Saidye-Bronfman Foundation and the Woodlawn Arts Foundation of Toronto), also says something in favour of making of documentaries in Canada. «It proves we can make a documentary and inspire people and deserve to be supported a lot more," says Weinstein.

Producer Barbara Sweete, pointing out that Rhombus has several projects in the works with a culture/arts orientation (Sweete, Weinstein, and partner Niv Fichman produced two one-hour specials with the CBC and Telefilm last year on the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, and one current undertaking is a 10-part series with the NFB on contemporary composers in Canada), hopes the Oscar nomination will further Rhombus' orientation.

In particular, Rhombus is working towards a variety special on composer Maurice Ravel, one of the trio's favourites. Aiming to enjoy the recognition stemming from the nomination, Sweete hopes the fallout would be one of allowing Rhombus to spend more

time on its creative concepts than promoting itself.

Shortly after receiving the nomination, Rhombus was informed of a Washington, D.C. entrepreneur's decision to run **Making Overtures** as a companion piece to **Amadeus** during an Oscar night in March.



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E A S T E R N W A V E

by Chris Majka

Film, like painting, literature and music owes much of its present form to the past. Although a newcomer to the arts (let me see, was there a Greek muse of film, much has transpired in the world of film since that Saturday afternoon, on December 28, 1895, when Auguste and Louis Lumière's father, Antoine, erected a wooden sign saying "cinématographe" pointing to the basement of Paris's Grand Café on 14, Boulevard des Capucines. Those of us involved in film are conscious, to greater or lesser degrees, of that history and it guides and influences us in conscious and subconscious ways in our choices of the forms, styles, and subject-matters of our productions. The problem is that we can make use of that history only to the extent that it is available and existent and, as we also all well know, that heritage is rapidly vanishing. The early nitrate stocks, on which much early film was shot, are decompos-

ing and much of what has not crumbled into dust has been lost through time. In Australia "The Last Great Film Search" has been launched with a team of archivists travelling the length and breadth of the country in a special van searching for material hidden in basements and attics. They calculate that whatever is not found within the next decade or so will simply no longer be in a preservable condition and will be lost to us forever.

In Nova Scotia, a new filmography project has been put into place to try and find and catalogue the province's past film productions and to point the way to collecting and preserving this precious resource. A groundbreaking effort of this kind was undertaken in British Columbia and resulted in a very considerable amount of material being unearthed. In its wake, the Nova Scotia archives approached the Public Archives of Canada with a request to fund a similar project

here and, in the spring of 1984, work began. The intent has been to approach all the major producers of film in the region, such as the NFB, CBC, ATV, and independent producers, to collect as much information as possible on their production history and to try and track down existing footage, stills, scripts, etc. which pertained to this material. As well, a research effort has been undertaken to track down historical material from the turn of the century onwards.

As Gordon Parsons, the person at the Nova Scotia Archives in charge of the filmography project explained to me, much of this early material appears to be lost, or, in the jargon of the archivist, although not found, there is no evidence of it not existing. The earliest footage shot in the province may have been of the departure of troops for the Boer War in 1899. Then, in the early part of this century, from about 1913 to 1925, there was a flurry of dramatic feature film production in Nova Scotia. It was led by the Halifax-based Canadian Bioscope Company (which produced such gems as **The Mexican Sniper's Revenge** and the Sydney-based Maritime Motion Picture Company (which shot dramatic films such as **The Seariders**, **Clansmen of the North** and **Big Timber**. Perhaps the best known film was **Evangeline** shot by Canadian Bioscope in 1913 in the province (despite high production values, a classical story and good reviews the film nevertheless had a difficult time finding distribution in the U.S. — sound familiar?)

There was also a stringer by the name of W.G. McLaughlin who shot footage for various Canadian and American newsreel companies. After 1925 this surge of narrative fiction film died down and various documentaries were made on picking apples of catching tuna. The first film produced by the province had the memorable title of **Cream Grading, Why?** and may have been shown in Halifax's Buzz Cinema. Only after the war when the Nova Scotia government created a film bureau and the National Film Board became active, did film work begin again in earnest and it is only from this period on that there is an abundance of existing film material.

The scope of the current project is to produce a published filmography of production done in Nova Scotia from the turn of the century to 1973. The next phase of work will bring this filmography up to date to the early 1980's and will look for areas of further research to be undertaken. Although there has been some

collection of film and video, this current phase of the project is principally geared to acquire knowledge of film and where it is located. A large-scale program of collection and preservation of film in the province requires considerable funds and with this in mind a unique initiative has been launched. This is the Nova Scotia Motion Picture Heritage Foundation which was established in the fall of 1984. This committee consists of representatives from the CBC, the NFB, the Public Archives, private-sector companies, and professional associations and its aim is to raise funds for the acquisition and preservation of historical film and tape material.

The project had originally hoped to employ the NFB's FORMAT software computer system for its information storage and retrieval; however, an implementation of this program for the microcomputer is not available and the Board, beset by a shortage of funds, was not able to commit itself to this development. As a result they have chosen to use a program called Marcom II, an archival information system developed in the U.S. Despite early efforts of the NFB to develop FORMAT as a national format for film data, it now ap-

pears that this has less and less likelihood of occurring as various concerns choose systems suitable to their own requirements.

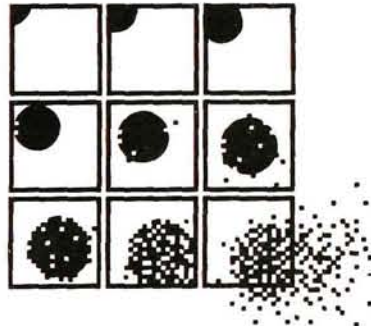
The filmography project has already unearthed a considerable body of information previously scattered and unknown. With its publication we shall be a major step ahead in our understanding of the film history of the area. With the further work of collection and preservation which the Public Archives and the Motion Picture Heritage Foundation plan to undertake, some of that precious history will be secured for future generations of people to see, understand and appreciate.

Errata

ERRATA — Last month's short film and videos from the '85 Grierson Seminar were written by Michael Zryd whose byline accidentally got lost in the production wringer.

Also, astute readers of last month's report on Cinémama '85 may have wondered where the event took place. Cinémama was held in Montreal over six consecutive weekends from Nov. 8 to Dec. 14.

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Toronto Arts Awards for filmmakers

TORONTO - Local filmmakers will be among the various artists up for civic recognition this fall when the first-ever Toronto Arts Awards are held Sept. 25 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre.

First conceived in 1984 after meetings between members of the Toronto Arts Council and *Toronto Life Magazine*, the Toronto Arts Awards were spear-headed by *Toronto Life* publisher Peter Herrndorf and Toronto Arts Council executive director Rita Davies. In full-time operation since last July, the Arts Awards Foundation's intention was announced by Herrndorf at a Feb. 3 media launch at the city's Art Gallery of Ontario.

Proudly observing the awards are community-based and thus differ from such industry-based awards as the Genies, Herrndorf says the aims will be to honour individual artistic excellence, elevate the profile of the arts in

Toronto, and recognize their economic, political, and cultural importance to the city. In the consideration of candidates to take place later this spring, nominations from the public will be invited in addition to a jury selection process.

In the first of what is planned to be an annual celebration, a total of \$50,000 will be presented in eight awards for artistic achievement. Within that total will be six \$5,000 Annual Award gifts, awarded in the categories of media arts (which includes film, television, radio, video, and electronic journalism), writing and editing, performing arts, music, visual arts, and architecture and urban design. The two remaining Lifetime Achievement Awards, valued at \$10,000 each, will not only be rated on the basis of artistic excellence but to individuals who have made a sustained and on-going contribution to one or more particular artistic disciplines (with half going to young artists in the recipients, name).

Funding of the Awards,

which began with \$18,000 from six founders, includes a \$25,000 start-up grant from Ontario's Ministry of Citizenship and Culture. A fund-raising campaign by the Foundation, begun last fall, is emphasizing corporate sponsors and is slated to continue until this April. That approach, which to date has attracted \$5,000 Award Sponsors in the American Can Canada Inc. company, the City of Toronto, and Southam Inc., was lauded at the launch by Culture Ministry Lily Munro for dove-tailing with the provincial Liberal government's arms-length support for culture.

Among the Awards Foundation's six juries drawn from Toronto's arts community figures Atlantis Films Limited president Michael MacMillan, who will serve as chairperson of the five-member media arts jury. The Awards, to be carried live by CBC channel 5 CBLT, will see the winning recipients' names being announced one week earlier at a news conference.

Hot Property is fun and games

TORONTO - For some people with filmmaking in-mind, it all begins at school and winds up in the real world of film production, Telefilm, and its ilk. For others, the road to movie making lies in a plastic yellow 35mm film can bearing the logo "Hot Property!"

Hot Property!, as the name suggests, is a new board-game that aims to simulate the real-life nature and nuances of producing a movie. To that end, the would-be movie producer must travel the board's two circles in search of its 20 undeveloped properties, screenwriters, directors, and stars. Once a player has landed on a distribution square, he can release his property theatrically to face the whims of critics.

Although Hot Property! lacks few rules aside from the talent having to match the property, the one constant is that whatever movies are produced are limited only by the imaginations of the movie mogul-player - to the point where players can be bailed out in return for coveted properties or, figuratively speaking, even stabbed in the back.

Hot Property!, by the way, was two-and-a-half years in the making before the first units came out last mid-November. The game itself is the realization of four Torontonians with film connections: writer Elena Palozzi, who created it after merging her passion for movies and games; actors Angelo Pedari and Angelo Rizacos who developed the game and put up the initial seed money for it; and TV producer/writer Carlyn Moulton, who last fall raised \$300,000 to develop the game. Together, and with 25 shareholders behind them, the foursome make up the somewhat aptly-named Take One Games Inc.

Since Hot Property!'s appearance on the board game spectrum, it has met with some considerable success, according to partner Angelo Pedari. Despite its late arrival, Hot Property! achieved sales of approximately 5,000 units (with another 10,000 units ready for the North American market) and has been picked up by 67 game stores in Ontario.

WHAT'S 22, MAD ABOUT FILM, AND HAS \$2,000 TO GIVE AWAY BY THE VICTORIA DAY WEEKEND?

The Dorothy and Oscar Burritt Memorial Award has been going strong for twenty-two years. The current Award of \$2,000 will be given to an individual or volunteer organization to undertake/complete/start a project contributing to film appreciation, and thus to a wider enjoyment and awareness of film as an art.

Dorothy and Oscar Burritt founded the film society movement in Canada, and this Award keeps alive the unique spirit and dedication of these film pioneers.

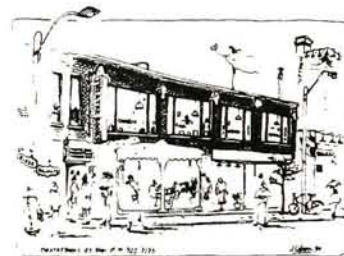
The Award-winner will be notified prior to the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Federation of Film Societies, in Vernon, B.C., May 17-19, 1986.

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Administered by the Canadian Federation of Film Societies, the Dorothy and Oscar Burritt Memorial Award is registered as a charity under the Income Tax Act. Donations to the capital fund are more than welcome, and receive a receipt for tax purposes when sent to the above address.

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Hyderabad fest study in film illusions as 90 Days screens

HYDERABAD, India — This South Indian city of the princes' ancient splendour made a comeback in early January when the Chief Minister, N.T. Rama Rao, a one-time movie star, played host to the most ostentatious film fest ever held in the country, the International Film Festival.

The city seemed under a state of siege for two weeks. Amid the razzle-dazzle of lights, fireworks and bon vivant the festival opened at the open-air auditorium specially constructed for the occasion in a record 90 days. The festival inauguration lasted for 90 minutes and the opening film screened was *90 Days*, a Canadian entry produced by the National Film Board of Canada and directed by Giles Walker.

Hindu, a prestigious daily newspaper praised the film for successfully driving home the point that "man is always on the look out for that elusive happiness in interpersonal relationships which are on the verge of extinction in western countries." While films from the West like *Sweet Dreams* (U.K.), *Paris, Texas* (France), or *On the Line* (Spain) poignantly projected this dilemma, Indian films presented a panorama of the new middle-class values that have driven away the old without coming to terms with the new. "Previously Indian sentiment and culture used to be reflected through films. Today it is neither our culture nor the culture of the west," Ashok Kumar, the doyen of Indian cinema, said in his inaugural speech.

Indian cinema yearly produces 700 films in more than a dozen languages that fetch the government an annual 400 crore rupees in entertainment-tax and continues to be the cheapest, perhaps the only, entertainment for the country's 700 million population. Government efforts to coax filmmakers in to using film as a medium of educating the masses have not succeeded. Formula films, where the line between line and spectacle remains mythical, continue to be churned out.

In many ways the film fest in Hyderabad only added to the myth. The impression was that the chief minister, who sees himself as a mythical god (having played a god in films for years) played the festival fiddle while the city was burning. Thousands of multi-coloured lights glittered across the city

cont. on p. 55

90 Days poised to earn cost back for Film Board

MONTREAL — Nominated for six Genies, *90 Days*, the comedy about two men searching for love, should earn its negative costs by the end of summer, says writer and director Giles Walker.

The NFB feature, which played in a Toronto theatre for an unprecedented 17 weeks and across the country in small cinemas, has earned about \$175,000 in ticket sales since its release last August. The balance of the \$500,000 budget will come through sales to First Choice, where it will air this year, to CBC which has purchased the rights for 1987, and through U.S. sales and video rights. The film was also sold in France.

90 Days was produced by the Alternative Drama program of the NFB in Montreal and, ac-

cording to NFB chairman François Macerola, helped "re-invent the feature film in Canada." What's innovative in this farce about one man who welcomes a Korean mail-order bride and his on-again-off-again friendship with another man who's been thrown out of his home by his wife and then jilted by his girlfriend, is its use of documentary techniques to tell a dramatic story. Says Walker, "We quite deliberately set out to evolve a hybrid — to combine documentary and drama."

Instead of actors, *90 Days* used what Walker calls "performers" all from the NFB itself, improvising dialogue and employing a minimum of locations. With the NFB's own in-house lab technology, the print, shot in 16mm, was

blown up to 35mm.

The film was shot in 31 days over several months, with breaks for editing and screenings to help define the performers strengths and develop the plot.

"No expectation can compare with the result," says Walker, who was overwhelmed by the response to the film.

"If Canadian filmmakers would tell their own story in their own words, it would make it unabashedly Canadian and therefore universal."

Walker, a St. Andrews, N.B. native, has been at the Board since 1972, first making documentaries, then dramas. He says he found neither form satisfying but is content with the Alternative Drama program that spawned first *The Mas-*

culine Mystique and now *90 Days*. Three more films are planned for 1986.

Walker, who was nominated for an Oscar in '80 for his 30-minute drama *Bravery in the Field*, says Canadians cannot compete with American filmmakers — and shouldn't even bother.

"Make it disgustingly Canadian and you'll sell it around the world. It's just common sense," he says.

He says *90 Days* and the west coast film *My American Cousin* demonstrate that Canadians can produce a distinctive domestic cinema. And they shouldn't worry about access.

"All they have to do is make a film people want to see."

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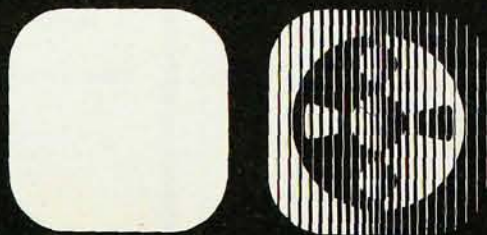
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Georges Dufaux to NFB's top job in French programming

MONTREAL — Georges Dufaux, cinematographer and a director at the National Film Board since 1956, has been named head of the French Program Branch. The nomination, effective Feb. 1, was announced by NFB president François Macerola following the resignation of Daniel Pinard.

While Dufaux does not see any simple solutions to the problems which confront him in his new job, "It shouldn't be so difficult, however, to raise the morale of the French section at the Board," he told *Cinema Canada*. An advocate of low-budget, non-commercial features and original documentaries, Dufaux believes that the Board must produce a cinema that distinguishes it from the private sector if it is to justify its existence.

"It's important that we hire freelance directors and editors for a certain time — from three to five years — so that they get to know the Board and can incorporate its value into their work," he commented, acknowledging that freelancers who come and go, project by project, do little to advance dynamic production.

Dufaux was on his way out of the Board when the nomination came. He had planned to work in the private sector, but says that, like many of his films, the nomination came accidentally. He has decided, after "working in the opposition" at the Board for a long time, to give the job three years. "I think the French sector is

happy to have a filmmaker in the job," he concludes. Dufaux has more than 30 films to his credit and most recently was responsible for three of films done in China by the Board in cooperation with the Chinese government. He was director of photography on Francis Mankiewicz's *Les Beaux souvenirs* and Léa Pool's *La Femme de l'hôtel*. He is currently working on a documentary about the fishing industry and plans to continue making films during his stint as head of French Programming.

Prisma reorganizing

MONTREAL — After 10 years, Marcia Couëlle has left Les Productions Prisma where she produced, among other things, *Les Bons débarras* and the series *Livres ouverts*. Her interest in the company was purchased by Prisma's director general, Claude Godbout.

Louise Ranger, who joined the company a year ago after leaving her post as head of the Institut Québécois du Cinéma is now responsible for general administration and distribution while Yves Plouffe is directly concerned with production. While maintaining its orientation toward children's series and dramatic films, Prisma will once again begin producing sponsored films, an activity it had abandoned several years ago.

Hyderabad

cont. from p. 54

as neighbourhoods complained of power-shortages because of the overload. Fountains splashed while the city gasped in a chronic water shortage. The government wanted everything to stand still for the event, even the trains that whizzed past the Public Gardens, the venue of the festival.

It was a show without direction that failed to provide a showcase for serious cinema. If the mood was highly spirited, the films were not.

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ON (EXPERIMENTAL) FILM

• by B. Sternberg •

Exciting times, good news! There is a lot of work being done these days in experimental film: Annette Manguard's *Her Soil Is Gold*, Sandra Meigs' *The Western Gothic*, Janko Virant's *P.P.F.*, Gerald Packer's *Life On The Hampster Wheel* and Philip Hoffman's *90, Zoo!* are all '86 – plus new works to come from Chris Gallagher, Joyce Wieland and Patricia Gruben. Also, international interest and recognition is, deservedly, high: the Oberhausen Festival requested A Mido Onodera's *Ten Cents A Dance (Parallax)* and *A&B In Ontario* by Joyce Wieland; the Festival Internationale Cinema Giovanni has invited Michael Snow to attend a week-long retrospective of his films in mid-March in Turin; and the Rotterdam Festival flew Philip Hoffman over to show his works. If the 1960's are regarded by some as the "golden years" of experimental film (and certainly they produced powerful works that challenged filmmaking practices and expanded ways of seeing), well the impetus of the '60s hasn't died – the '80s are here in full force.

But the same week that Annette and Sandra brought their films in for distribution, a request by Canada House, England to purchase five experimental films was nixed by External Affairs, Ottawa. The Information Department, which handles film, is only buying films that can be used to promote trade and industry, not "cultural" films; and the Visual Arts Department (Cultural Affairs) agree that, yes, they should be handling experimental films, promoting this artwork abroad as they do other visual arts, BUT they are already overburdened, understaffed and under-financed and so cannot possibly take on anything more. And CBC's *State of the Arts/Arts Report* would not allow the discussion of a certain experimental film because, as it was explained to

me, it was not felt to be in the interest of the Canadian public to talk about films that most haven't seen, that appeal to an intellectual few and that don't have national exposure (though the film in question had shown at the AGO and the Bloor cinema in Toronto, in New York, and has upcoming screenings in Montreal, Kingston and Berlin). I was told that they weren't unsympathetic and if I could get it on CBC late night TV (why late night?), then *State of the Arts* could do something with it. Will the circle never be unbroken? Do I really need to state that it is "serving the interests" not only of the makers of the films (Canadians, artists) but also of the public to inform, educate, give exposure... But until CBC Radio is convinced otherwise, I guess we'll just have to be content with *Rambo* and *Bartok*.

How many times have I used the word BUT in this and previous columns? I'm getting tired of the complaint mode, or could it be that complaining is the normal mode, the style of everyday conversation? (Have you ever listened-in at restaurants or on the bus?) The other day while I was lunching a man asked to share my table. He, silver-grey hair, well-dressed, European accent, was, as I later found out, from Romania. We struck up a conversation. He told me stories: about the time he was working for Paramount Pictures and got fired protecting a beautiful co-worker from the boss' advances; I mentioned my work as a filmmaker and interest in language theories which reminded him of the train ride through Poland and a beautiful woman with whom he shared a compartment, they had no language in common but managed nonetheless to communicate. I remarked on his ability to tell stories – just like my

grandfather always could – and wondered why I couldn't. My conversations quote from books, are in terms of recent theories, describe works I've seen in galleries, theatres, on TV, trace historical trends or complain about work, men and the weather.

We pondered this change in conversational style – could it be due to the move away from the "family home" with its accumulation of shared experiences, or the imposition of television whose 'stories' are received non-stop and unilaterally? Where once listeners-to-stories became the next generation of tellers, now, it seems, receivers become analysers/critics.

Or is the difference a cultural one: the "Canadian" or "American" versus the "European" manner of expression. Or could it be more a "style of the times" when News means only bad news – disasters, terrorism, falling dollar. Perhaps, complaining is not the right word then. Is telling of polluted river systems complaining or stating the situation as it is – and the act of telling/revealing a positive step towards amelioration (so, I haven't been complaining in this column).

And is this change really simply a difference in style of speaking, or has it more to do with different ways of experiencing our worlds and recounting that experiencing? But what has all of this to do with experimental film? A lot, I suspect, in as much as films have a lot to do with how a society tells its story.

Peter Harcourt, in his article "Politics or Paranoia" (*Cinema Canada* No. 120-121) asks: "Is not the impulse to tell stories and to listen to the stories of others both a primordial human need and a chief agent of social bonding?...and without it would we – as a social entity – have any sense of ourselves at all?" Bruce Elder counters that fictional narrative is too positive a form (presents order, relations and conclusions) to tell the bleak truths of today and that to break from the logic of West-

ern history that has led us to this dehumanizing age of technology we must "tell" in other forms altogether.

Some Feminist film theory argued against narrative on the basis that entrenched within the structure itself (linearity, conflict, closure) are patriarchal values and so called for oppositional forms which interrogate narrative. (Read: Laura Mulvey, Kaja Silverman, Teresa de Laurentis.) And Jean-Luc Godard's films of revolution deconstruct in order to reveal the illusionary entrapments of conventional narrative films which, he contended, support the *status quo* of the ruling bourgeoisie.

Experimental film offers alternative ways of perceiving, and, sometimes, a primacy/intermediacy of experience which may be, in the words of Heidegger, a "step back into the sphere of human being (which) demands other things than does progress into the machine world."

I think it appropriate to give the last word in this "conversation" to Jack Chambers: "Perception is the intelligible brilliance within us when our soul and the soul of things become present to one another."

GOOD NEWS UPDATE: National Film Week '86, Vancouver, March 21-29 will mark the official opening of the new Pacific CineCentre, which is comprised of three non-profit film organizations: Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution West, Cineworks (a local production co-op), and Pacific Cine mathèque. The nine days will be devoted to noon-hour free screenings, afternoon workshops and seminars, evening 'tributes' and screenings including *Skip Tracer* by Zale Dalen, *My American Cousin* by Sandy Wilson, *Amerika* by Al Razutis, Patricia Gruben's *Low Visibility* (premiering the revised version of the film), *So Is This* by Michael Snow, new works by Joyce Wieland, *Overnight* by Jack Darcus, *Crime Wave* by John Paizs and the premiere of a feature-length experimental

documentary by Kirk Tougas, *Return To The Departure*: the biography of a painting or watching the pigment dry and other realisms. Thematic programmes include "Myth and Reality in Women's Cinema," "West Coast Experimental Cinema: selected works", "Trains" – experimental films, and selections of films from three co-ops: Winnipeg Film Group, NIFCO, Newfoundland, and The Funnel, Toronto. A seminar, *Avant-Garde Film Practice: 6 Views* features panelist filmmakers Patricia Gruben, Al Razutis, David Rimmer, Michael Snow, Joyce Wieland and Ross McLaren.

TV Ontario is preparing two programmes to be aired the first two Wednesdays in September, 9:00-11:00 p.m. – prime time! **New Directions – Film.** Produced by Richard Johnson, hosted by Elwy Yost, the shows will involve interviews with filmmakers from the established to students, working in experimental, documentary and dramatic forms, industry-related and independents, as well as excerpted portions of their most recent films. YAY and HOORAY!

Toby opens big

TORONTO – Toby McTeague, one of two films pulled last November from nominations for the 1986 Genie Awards after failing to meet the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television's distribution requirement (together with *The Blue Man*, Toby McTeague was not finished in time for the requisite 1985 theatrical release), will at last arrive on the big screen. March 7 the film, produced by Nicolas Clermont and directed by Jean-Claude Lord, will open in time for the mid-winter school break on 25 screens in 19 communities across Ontario.

Spectrafilm, distributor of Toby McTeague, plans a national release backed by television spots by the end of March. Handling the film's distribution in Quebec will be Ciné 360.

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Billy Jack Laughlin chops Canadian shoot

TORONTO — Will Billy Jack come back? That question, directed at actor/director Tom Laughlin and his fourth Billy Jack film, *The Return of Billy Jack*, is the big mystery on the Toronto film scene.

Laughlin, who began shooting *The Return of Billy Jack* last Dec. 30 in Metro Toronto for a 10-week shoot scheduled to end Feb. 28, suddenly exited from the set following an alleged injury during a Jan. 30 fight scene. In that sequence, Laughlin was reported to have suffered a severe concussion after being hit over the head three times by a breakaway bottle that didn't work (one source says the production's special effects person was absent from the set that day).

Press releases, which state the incident left pieces of glass in Laughlin's skull, went on to quote his Los Angeles spokesman Al Newman remarking that, despite being nearly knocked out, Laughlin "finished the fight sequence and filmed the rest of the day in a state of semi-amnesia." That same release, dated Feb. 3, continued "It wasn't until two days later when he was obviously severely ill that he

allowed himself to be taken off the picture and hospitalised."

Hospitalisation consisted, according to releases, of Laughlin being secretly flown to Los Angeles' Cedars-Sinai Medical Centre, where he was said to have sustained a severe concussion, neck injuries, and a linear hairline fracture of the skull. It wasn't until the following Wednesday Feb. 5, after a two-day stay, that Laughlin was released from Cedars-Sinai for up to a week's recovery at home under the care of a neurosurgeon.

However, one source told *Cinema Canada* of calling Cedars-Sinai and being told they had no record of the actor/director having spent two days there. Equally uncertain, meanwhile, is the state of production on *The Return of Billy Jack*, with Laughlin's Toronto publicist saying he would return to the shoot by Feb. 7, and after that deadline passed, by Feb. 17. Still, just as there was no explanation for Laughlin's having to be flown to Los Angeles for medical treatment, there was no word of his return by the latter date, nor any explanation for his continued absence.

The uncertainty about Laughlin's actions is also causing some concern for his Toronto publicist, Promotionally Yours' Donald Martin. Speaking on the record Martin told *Cinema Canada* "I'm very puzzled by the whole thing...It's very strange. I'm just putting things on hold." Although he noted Promotionally Yours hasn't been formally released from its contract as unit publicist, Martin said his intention, whatever Laughlin decides to do, will be to hand in his company's resignation from the film.

A call to the production office in Toronto of *The Return of Billy Jack Inc.* Feb. 17 proved enlightening as an unidentified woman said there's been no sign at all of Laughlin nor any idea whether he will return. She did note, though, that the crew were striking the sets and that, not only have no suppliers been paid, but the last pay-date for most production staff was Feb. 1. Asked why people were still there if the production office was shutting down, she remarked, "We're just hanging on as a favour to ourselves."

Some other people working

on *The Return of Billy Jack*, meanwhile, have apparently decided not to hang on any longer. Noting the Laughlin film was a moderately-sized production, Martin said it is starting to lose crew and cast to the just-commenced American feature film *Dead of Winter*, most notably actor Jan Rubes for seven weeks.

While the Ontario Film Development Corporation's Ontario Film/Video Office had no idea what was going on with *The Return of Billy Jack*, Naish McHugh, head of the Toronto Film Liaison Office, had more certain, gloomier information. McHugh, whose office arranges shooting location permits, says a number of the several locations Laughlin has used in Toronto remain unpaid (one sizeable location, owed a four-figure sum, received a cheque from Laughlin that bounced). While that creates the potential souring of relationships with location owners for McHugh, another venue of grief is the Sheraton Centre — also still unpaid — where the Billy Jack cast and crew had been housed by their director.

McHugh, also familiar with reports of Billy Jack's return, said his office has no outstanding location permits issued to Laughlin. And, having initially

been told Laughlin's budget for the film was \$4.5 to \$5 million, McHugh is also curious about other reports that quote it at \$12 million (the figure given in the production's press releases).

What makes the state of the Billy Jack film even more curious is how the current reality fails to jibe with the celebrated plans and hyperbole preceding Laughlin's arrival in Toronto. According to press releases Laughlin, together with his wife/co-star/executive producer Delores Taylor, claims to have raised \$29 million from "50 prominent Texas businessmen" for three films (\$12 million for *The Return of Billy Jack*, plus two other features with \$9 million and \$8 million budgets each).

Laughlin, who in releases extolled the "world-class" calibre of Toronto film crews and said "Toronto has more good acting talent per capita than any other city on the face of the earth," also arrived with lofty aims in mind for the domestic film scene. To be precise, Laughlin, calling Canada "an absolute gold mine for filmmaking," had hoped "eventually" to make 25 films a year in the country.



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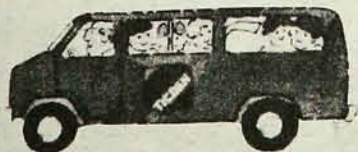
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