

Léa Pool's

Anne Trister

If feminism in the '60s consisted, in part, of a rejection of mothers and their roles in the social structure, the '80s have brought a return to the mother, if not to the domestic and familial values of the '40s and the '50s.

Anne Trister, Léa Pool's second feature, seems to be concerned with this new feminist position which echoes the concerns of other feminist films of the '80s, such as **The Bad Sister**, made for British television by Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen, and Kay Armatage's **Storytelling**. These films try to find some kind of alternative position for women that is outside the classical Oedipal text. Much of this work is based on the post-Lacanian psychoanalytic theory of such French feminists as Cixous, Irigaray, Lemoine-Luccioni and Montrelay, concerned with the relationship to the mother, the return to the mother and the need to accept the mother if one is to produce a feminist discourse outside the patriarchal (Oedipal) cycle.

The first shot in **Anne Trister** is that of a young woman's naked back, she's lying on a bed and crying. The camera pulls back and we see an older woman dressed in black sitting rigidly on a bench a few feet in front of her. She does not move to comfort her. The next shot is of the young woman walking around in a desolate, half-built building whose grey walls are covered in graffiti. We hear the sounds of water and wind. On one wall is scribbled, "Adam and Eve" On another there is a huge drawing of a naked man and woman and two small children. As she walks around this labyrinth-like structure we see another graffiti of a raised fist, some written obscenities, and the words "La loi" appear on another wall. Cut to her face as she walks forward. A woman's voice is raised in the Hebrew prayer for the dead and we see a corpse, wrapped in a white sheet, being carried through the desert on a stretcher. A funeral procession follows, and the young woman is one of the mourners. The titles appear over a close-up of moving sand; the sound of water is heard.

The opening scenes are highly dramatic and their lack of a realistic context makes them seem to be symbolic. Of what, we do not know yet.

A hand paints a red line on a window, the camera pulls back and we are with the young woman in an art class. From this point on the film takes a realistic turn and the emphasis is on the psychological drama of the young woman, Anne Trister, trying to come to terms with her father's death. She decides to leave her lover and go to Montreal. At the airport, her mother (the woman who was watching her cry) sneaks to Anne's lover, Pierre, of her



• Symbolizations of desire in **Anne Trister**: Louise Marleau as Alix with Albane Guilhe as Anne

daughter's despair over the death of her father and how the mother was never able to give her daughter the love she needed.

Loud, dramatic music now and a jerky pan over the skyline of Montreal. It's Anne's point-of-view. She has arrived in Montreal and here she looks up two people. One is an old Jewish man who runs a café, a friend of her father. As they sit talking about her father (in a conventionally shot scene consisting of close-ups and shot-counter-shot editing) there is a sudden cut from Anne's face to a video-screen shot of a little girl bandaging a teddy bear. She is being treated by a therapist at the Sainte Justine Hospital. The woman therapist, Alix, is the other person who Anne looks up. She moves into her apartment and the continual and rather awkward cross cutting between Anne and the child, Sara, whom Alix is treating makes it obvious that we are to draw a parallel between their two cases.

One of the virtues of the film is that it is rather hard to tell what will be the outcome of this plot. But one of the disappointments is that eventually we realize that this is a conventional dramatic story, with its usual narrative tension and climax. However, here the roles have been switched and instead of the tension between a man and a woman leading to the climax of their eventual coupling, we find ourselves involved in a love story between two women. One begins to wonder if we'll be subjected to the usual titillating, exploitative scenes of lesbian love-making. Fortunately the film avoids this and Louise Marleau's performance as the therapist caught between her male lover and her concern for and attraction to the young painter is both believably

and sensitively played. Albane Guilhe portrays Anne as a lost, young woman looking for herself in her art and in her relationship to another woman. Although she's believable enough in the role of a sensitive girl in need of the care and affection of an older woman, it is hard to see her as conscious or sophisticated enough to create the complex art work which becomes the central symbol of the film.

Simon, her father's friend, and an obvious father substitute, gives her a studio. There is a long pan around the peeling grey walls, which echoes the pan through the deserted building at the beginning. Anne takes the whole studio as her canvas and turns it into an intricate architectural environment whose obsessive all-over patterning, and multiple false perspectives, crossed with a strong linear play of shafts of light and painted shadows, is reminiscent of the expressionist sets of **The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari**, the 1920 silent film classic. In some ways the studio comes to look like a mausoleum, a tomb, and Anne's own precarious balance is echoed in that of a falling red chair she paints on the wall. There is a beautiful scene where she is lying on the scaffold with her eyes shut and an overturned pot of red paint at her side. She awakes to find that a pigeon has somehow flown into the studio. It flaps around the room trying to find a way out, knocking against the real and the false windows but finding no exit.

Unfortunately (except for the prologue) the rest of the film does not come up to the imaginative height of this central symbol. Instead it becomes a psychological drama with an emphasis on the character's emotions, shot mostly in sharp, well-lit close-ups. Like

other films financed in part by television, the visuals seem to be constructed specifically for the small screen and a sense of claustrophobia develops. In this case this is doubly disappointing. First, because the concept of the film and some of its parts promise much more, but also because Léa Pool's earlier films show such a wonderful mastery of the cinematic language as a means of poetic expression.

La femme de l'hôtel (1984) also deals with the parallels between the artist and the neurotic personality. But in that film there is no separation between the real world and that of the artist's imagination. A soft, muted light echoes the muted lives of the women, and the deadness of the city in winter becomes an ever-expanding metaphor for the deadness and alienation that they struggle with. The inter-relationship of the artist/filmmaker and the neurotic woman who resembles her fictive character is carefully woven out of chance encounters. In other words the inner and outer realities of the film mirror and echo each other in a more subtle and evocative way than in **Anne Trister** where the continual straight cuts between Anne and her counterpart, Sara, are jarring and heavy-handed. Except for some wintry exteriors, the physical reality of the city does not seem to be used in any metaphorical or even mood-inducing manner. Alix's apartment, with its soft greys and blues and its multiple windows that look out into the real world, does seem to function as an alternative symbol to the mausoleum-like studio. But, like most of the other locales in the film, it looks like a stage set and I ended up feeling that I was watching a play filmed for televis-

ion. The filmmaker must have also felt a lack because her use of music becomes over-emphatic, making sure we understand the dramatic emotions involved in her story and threatening to turn the whole thing into a melodrama. When the chords started plunking at every kiss of the climactic scene I definitely squirmed in my seat. The non-diegetic use of the song "La main gauche" seemed rather excessive. Especially as its message was already present in the conflicting emotions passing across Louise Marleau's wonderfully expressive face. That the intricate and painful emotions of such a relationship could be so subtly portrayed in the acting and then marred by the shortcoming of the film is doubly frustrating.

In the end one is left feeling that the film is taking a strong feminist stance. But what is it? Certainly the men in the film seem silly and inconsequential (except for the dead father and he only lives on as a ghostly presence). It is the women who are strong, interesting characters and their dilemmas central to the plot. That Anne is trying to get back to her mother through Alix is made obvious in two passages in the film; the Petit Poucet story, and the letter she writes to her mother. At one point, Anne listens to a tape from her lover telling a story of the Petit Poucet finding his way back to his mother's womb. And towards the end of the film, Anne writes a letter to her mother which sounds as if it's written to her lover. Towards the end, the scene of Anne crying in the bed with her mother looking on is repeated with Alix in her mother's place, but this time the mother figure crosses the space between them and holds her. This is the climax of the film.

Thus Anne Trister can be seen as a re-working of the Oedipus myth in feminist terms. The fall of Oedipus, as a tragic hero, comes about because, in his hubris he kills his father and marries his mother. The girl-child also experiences her first erotic attachment to the mother but in working out the conflicting emotions inherent in that relationship she rejects the mother and transfers her eroticism to the father. However this entails a rejection of solidarity with her own sex and an acceptance of her role as secondary to that of the male. In Lacanian terms, it also entails an acceptance of patriarchal law and an entrance into the symbolic; the codification of reality by language. A return to the mother thus signifies a return to the imaginary, the pre-verbal world, that she is associated with. Although the mother is the spokesperson for the symbolic order she bars total access to it. The never-ending fascination of the relation with the mother holds part of women in the imaginary order and for her to be able to speak for herself she must acknowledge the permanence of this relationship.

As Anne herself says as she rejects the standard forms of the still life to achieve the conception and actualization of her imaginary architectural environment, "One has to be in an extremely serious situation to be able to move...I would like to have the courage of my dreams." For her this situation is the death of the idealized father. It leaves her in a state of disarray clearly articulated by the multiple perspectives and dizzying imbalance of her creation. But it also al-

lows her to find her way back to the mother through her relationship to Alix. In her role as therapist Alix also plays the part of the mother, mediating between the imaginary and the symbolic, dream and reality, past and present.

However, like the tragic hero, Anne, in her hubris, brings about her own fall. This is already implied in the falling red chair she paints on the wall. As in the original childhood conflict, she stands between the father and the mother, in this case Alix and her lover, Thomas. It is after Thomas comes and tells her that he loves Alix and won't let her be destroyed that she forgets to set the lock on the wheels of the scaffold and this oversight is the occasion for her fall.

In mythic terms, the fall of the hero is also the fall into time and reality, as in Adam's fall from Paradise. But it is also a fall to the natural cycle and can imply a sense of liberation, as well as a passage from innocence to experience. Anne's artistic creation is destroyed when the building it was housed in is demolished. But this scene also suggests a sense of liberation as fresh air and sunlight are allowed into its closed world and we hear the sound of the bird escaping.

The scene of Anne crying on the bed is re-enacted at the end of the film, but this time the return to the mother is achieved through her relationship with Alix. The film ends with a home-movie of Anne in Israel, besides her father's grave, but the desert around it has blossomed into flowering plants.

If *Anne Trister* for me succeeds less well than *La femme de l'hôtel* as a visual, artistic whole, it provides deeper and more complex characterizations in the two leads. Unlike the earlier film, these characters do not remain static, trapped in their neurosis, but achieve both transformation and growth.

Mary Alemany-Galway •

ANNE TRISTER d. Léa Pool sc. Marcel Beaulieu, Léa Pool, from an original idea by Léa Pool p. Roger Frappier, Claude Bonin exec.p. Roger Frappier 1st a.d. Mireille Goulet cont. Monique Champagne d.o.p. Pierre Mignot cam. Jean Lépine 1st asst.cam. Serge Lafortune 2nd asst.cam. Michel Bissonnette video cam. François Gill sp.efx.coord. Jacques Godbout assts. Philippe Palu, Pierre Rivard, Antonio Vidosa, Gilles Rieuppreux stills Bertrand Carrière sd. Richard Besse boom Yvon Benoit sd.efx. Ken Page asst. Vital Millette sd.efx.rec. Claude Chevalier mus.rec. Louis Hone mix. Jean-Pierre Joutel, Hans Peter Strobl p.man. Michel Dandavino, Marie-Andrée Vinet p.assts. Norbert Dufour, Ghislaine Mathieu, Tristan Roy loc.man. Pierre Houle, Pierre Plante unit man (Switz.) Gérard Rucy unit man (Isr.) Shlomo Paz admin. Monique Létourneau asst. Louise Cousineau, Evelyn Régimbald p.sec Johanne Pelletier, Nicole Bernier p.acct. Daniel Demers, Louise Dupré tech. coord. Edouard Davidovici post-p.sup. Suzanne Dussault painted environment concept & d. Geneviève Desgagnés, Daniel Sirdey assembled by Marie Maltais, Peter Hastings, Caroline Drouin assts. Greg Charlton, Georges Léonard, Paola Ridolfi art d. Vianney Gauthier asst.art d. Patrice Bengle on-set props Daniel Huysmans props Ian Lavoie, Pierre Gauthier cost. Gaudeline Sauriol dresser Marie-Anne Carter make-up Diane Simard hair Gaétan Noisieux, Lyne Normandin hd.lighting Roger Martin elect. Normand Viau, Jean Trudeau trainee Sylvaine Dufaux key grip Yvon Boudrias grip Jean-Pierre Lamarche loc.scout Michel Dandavino ed. Michel Arcand asst.ed. Alain Belhumeur orig.mus. René Dupéré with Daniel Deshaime mus. Sylvain Clavette, Claude Vendette mus.rights Evelyn Régimbald, "De la main gauche" comp.& sung by Danielle Messia, "Kaddisch" by Maurice Ravel int.by Marie-Danielle Parent, soprano, and the Studio C chamber orchestra directed by Richard Hoenich, "Ridiculous Love" comp. & interpreted by Daniel Lavoie, "Primadonna" by Gianna Nannini p.c. National Film Board of Canada, and Les Films Vision 4 Inc. produced with the participation of the Société Générale du Cinéma du Québec, Téléfilm Canada and the Société de Radio-Télévision du Québec dist. Ciné 360 Inc. running time: 115 mins. l.p. Albane Guilhe, Louise Marleau, Lucie Laurier, Guy Thauvette, Hugues Quester, Nuvit Ozdogru, Kim Yaroshevskaya.

Yves Simoneau's **Pouvoir intime**

"God, that was good! But, uh...what's the point?"

— overheard after screening

A black screen: the darkness oppressive as the gritty sound-track insinuates itself into consciousness, then the story slowly unfurls with deliberate, careful pace. Now a unique visual style washes over the screen: the first characters you see are in eerily beautiful shadows reminiscent of the black and white classics of the thriller genre, yet made prosaic by a strange new voice. As further characters are introduced, each with a different and spectacular cinematic device (overhead travels, back to cameras, low-angle backward, etc.) you feel them gaining a physical existence with a control of effects that belies this director's youth, but not his talent.

By the time the audience cries out in unison at the first surprise fright, we're hooked.

It is, indeed, at the visceral level, where thrillers should act, that *Pouvoir intime* works so astonishingly well. Director and Genie-winner Yves Simoneau, 30, manipulates tension and suspense using a triple-whammy combination of masterful pacing, original visual style and a surprisingly effective soundtrack. Without resorting either to the genre's typical gore and car-chases, or to stereotype over-kill, he tells his story — in fact, grinds it into you. *Pouvoir intime* contains scenes that reverberate in one's consciousness days after viewing, as a distant echo of some forgotten horror. We live with these characters, their courage, their fears, their limitations, their failures. And we curse their deaths.

The premise of the story, the conflict between power and the lack of it, between control and being controlled, is transmitted through the vehicle of a

botched security truck robbery. The thieves, a pair of down-and-out ex-cons, the son of one of them and the girlfriend of the other, act under the illusion that they are working for themselves, for Big Money. Actually they are mere pawns in the hands of a powerful and mysterious civil servant and his seedy go-between who are after secret documents inside the truck in question. Only the ring-leader, Théo, is aware of the game.

Through an unforeseen turn of events, a guard is left still alive inside the truck after it has been successfully taken and hidden in an old theatrical warehouse. The plan for a quick getaway is foiled by the guard, who makes a courageous stand inside the locked vehicle despite every attempt the thieves make to dislodge him. The torment of each opposing faction as they strive against each other with courage, determination, violence and the threat of slow death makes for gritty scenes of incredible, blood-curdling power. This cinematic rendition of conflict is its purest, abject form, implicit and realistic, is among the strongest I've ever experienced in any Canadian film.

The script, co-written by Simoneau and actor Pierre Curzi, handles action, fear and tension better than it does the dialogue, which is adequate but unremarkable. True to the genre, all the female roles looked flat compared to their male counterparts. In an unsuccessful effort to add flesh to the Roxanne character (played by Marie Tifo), the script operates a stereotype-in-reverse. Instead of a chesty, squeaky-voiced blond bombshell, we have a plain, androgynous and square-boned woman who wanders into either men's or women's bathrooms indifferently, whose existence seems ill-defined and unrealistic.

The characters form the spectrum of the thriller format: 1) the manipulating bad guys, first lit in black and white shadows but moving on to artificial lighting, which, much like their interests, are preoccupied with exterior, modern, superficial desires; 2) the anti-heroic thieves, true "beautiful losers" of Canadian lore, who wear their humanness as a badge of glory and die with tears in their eyes; 3) the honest, good guy, security guard Martial, terrified,



• *Pouvoir intime* works at the visceral level: Jacques Godin holds Eric Brisebois as Marie Tifo and Pierre Curzi look on

wounded, just trying to stay alive, but barely retaining his sanity by clinging to his one remaining pillar — the love of his life. (But when even she appears to have conspired against him, he is destroyed); and 4) a side-line love-interest is thrown in, but in a departure from the norm the character, Janvier (Jacques Lussier), is a gay young man. However, the central relationship between the leading female role, Roxanne, and conspirator Gaétan, is never properly defined and seems confined to looking at each other with misty-eyes.

As for the father-son relationship of Théo and Robin, mighty efforts are required from both actors to keep from falling into a stereotype — and they just barely achieve it. Jacques Godin shines, as always, as a strong and loving father, while 16-year-old actor Eric Brisebois gives a good performance as a young man caught in the maelstrom of enveloping violence.

Another veteran actor, Jean-Louis Millette, fits his role well as a shady low-life who actually raises a flag to decency before he too is crushed by events beyond his control.

Robert Gravel, playing the security guard, renders a truly stunning performance as a man caught in a deadly situation, and gradually being destroyed by slow, painful inches. Some of his scenes are among the most memorable of the film.

Director of photography Guy Dufaux brings a look of strong linear beauty to Simoneau's direction (which must have been difficult to shoot at times), while artistic director Michel Proulx works wonders creating a realistically gritty yet beautiful world for the actors to fit in. Despite its \$1.7 million budget, this film *looks* like it cost five times that.

A good deal of the film's effectiveness in creating a suitably tense atmosphere, its deliciously acrid tang, is achieved in the marriage between Simoneau's direction and the music track created by Richard Grégoire.

Simoneau develops the story with a detailed awareness of pacing and creating atmosphere. He adds broadstrokes of tension like an artist applying paint — layer by poignant layer, playing on every fear and phobia common to man, weighing each stroke for its effect as much as its reasoning. As a result, tension builds to a seemingly inevitable crescendo. Therefore more is the pity when the true ending dissipates this pent-up energy with one senseless, nihilistic and anti-climactic orgy of self-destruction of the main players, the very characters the audience have

come to *care* about, and just when the script had pointed brilliantly to a moment of confrontation that should have been the high-point of the story. Instead, when the heavy arrives, two of the four thieves are already dead (one by their own hand).

Despite the unsatisfying ending to a memorable tale, **Pouvoir intime** is an important work of cinema, that could win wider markets than its present local release (though, it's been doing well in its first week). A European release is entirely conceivable, as the French are great fans of American-style thrillers.

Someone is bound to wonder what Simoneau could possibly do as an encore, given a heftier budget and an outstanding script. Judging by the brilliance of **Pouvoir intime**, it would be well worth finding out.

André Guy Arseneault •

Ron Mann's

Listen To The City

Ron Mann's **Listen to the City**, the first (and to date, only) dramatic feature by the celebrated Toronto documentarist (**Imagine the Sound, Poetry in Motion, Marcia Resnick's Bad Boys**), was completed in 1984 but, by 1986, still hadn't more than a scant handful of public screenings in Canada.

Following a carnivorously nasty reception at its premiere at the '84 Festival of Festivals in Toronto, the film was re-edited by Mann but its distributor, Spectrafilm, remains reluctant to push for screenings. Whether that's because the film still bears the taint of high-profile humiliation (and no beast is tougher than Torontosaurus), or because its formal and political eccentricities make it a hard sell for a commercial distributor seeking first-run engagements in commercial theatres, (its best context would be a classroom or a political meeting) the virtual non-release of **Listen to the City** is unfortunate. For it is one of the more original features produced in English Canada in this decade. (Only in Canada. Pity.)

A self-described "political fable" that combines elements of Godard, Marvel comics, Orwell, rock video and King Vidor's **Our Daily Bread**, **Listen to the City** takes the form (but thankfully not the tone) of an academic argument: it addresses a particular problem and posits a possible strategy for solution.

The problem is unemployment. As introductory titles inform us, Canada's ever-escalating unemployment rate is encompassing increasing numbers of Canadian youth — a situation that cannot bode well for the fostering of a healthy sense of optimism and commitment concerning the nation's future. **Listen to the City's** quasi-utopian, urban romantic solution, which it will allegorically illustrate, is job rotation, the concept of rotating work periods so great numbers of workers can share the same jobs. To create, as the titles boldly prophecy, a "new social solidarity in which ever scarcer jobs are shared by more and more people."

But what follows is not the didactically strained *agitprop* these titles ominously foretell. Quite the contrary. In fact, for all its initial political threats, **Listen to the City** has actually far less political savvy than it has aesthetic gumption. Its cultural concerns are firmly of the pop variety, and its somewhat scattered social improvement strategies are finally less convincing or captivating than the sheer formal exuberance of the film. This affinity to art before politics is in fact immediately established in **Listen to the City's** first sequence, which shows an apparently bedevilled hospital inmate (played by poet-songwriter-reformed junkie Jim Carroll) taking to the street armed with sunglasses, an intravenous stand and a steady stream of prophetic poetic platitudes ("Power is not wealth and power does not serve wealth...", "Our work is our passion and our passion is our task..."). The poet-songwriter figure, a romantic symbol of the exaltation-through-suffering of art and artists, who will re-appear throughout the film like some Christly panhandler, has a signifying resonance far more profound and immediate than most of the more elaborate and developed scenarios he's constantly barging in on. He stands for art and pain and vision and such, and his romantic function in the movie can actually stand for the whole movie, which

is really more a plea for art than a call to arms.

Listen to the City tells the story of an eponymous metropolis (undisguisedly Toronto, though not named as such) on the verge of economic collapse as its principal industrial mainstay, Lambda Corporation, is threatening to withdraw because of what slick company spokespersons claim is an irrecoverable decline in profits. We don't trust these silver-haired smoothies a whit and, as it turns out, well that we shouldn't. It seems that Lambda's icily cool and cynical wunderkind president, Shadow (Sky Gilbert), is orchestrating the whole scam from an immaculately sparse office somewhere high in the sky above Bay Street. Shadow's plan is to offer to sell to Lambda workers the seemingly-crippled company at a bargain basement price. Not only will such a scheme bestow upon Shadow a politically progressive nice-guy veneer, it will facilitate his bailing out just in time to avoid (nyah-hah-hah!) the stock market collapse he knows is imminent. It is the agitation of the workers by Shadow's Devo-esque thugs, and the attempts of a reporter (P.J. Soles), a union officer, and a liberal city council member (Barry Callaghan) to put a stop to Lambda's mustache-twiddling subterfuge, that makes up most of **Listen to the City's** dramatic intrigue.

But it is actually the fracturing and disassembly of the parallel scenarios (which collide at the climax) that distinguishes the film, and not their integrated linear momentum. Structured something like a video monitor set on rapid remote control channel-changing, the film conveys more in terms of jarring juxtaposition than it does dramatic development. And while the puzzling parallel intrigues do not fuse in an entirely neat and satisfactory manner in the end, their simultaneity is neither random nor meaningless. In attempting to establish in cinematic terms the same sense of socialist cooperation and mechanical interdependency allegorically alluded to by the voiceover that calls the city a "symphony of voices", Mann's fractured fable acts as an apt working example of politics as process, involving constant changes of perspective and simultaneous individual endeavour. Like the city, political action is not independent entity; it consists of many disparate activities, voices and

• In **Listen To The City**, Sandy Home of The Spoons uses her music to build harmony out of divergent aural and stylistic elements



POUVOIR INTIME d. Yves Simoneau p. Claude Bonin, Roger Frappier; sc. Yves Simoneau, Pierre Curzi 1st a.d. Alain "Lino" Chartrand cont. Johanne Prgent d.o.p. Guy Dufaux stills Warren Lipton art d. Michel Proulx set des. Normand Sarrazin props Pierre Fournier p.acct. Daniel Demers asst. Louise Dupré p.sec. Nicole Bernier p.asst. Christine Jasmin mus. Richard Grégoire ed. André Corriveau sup.sd.ed. Paul Dion asst. Marie-Claude Gagné make-up Micheline Trépanier cost. Louise Jobin dresser Luc Le Flaguais gaffer Yves Charbonneau elect. Denis Ménard, Eloi Deraspé, Brian Baker key grip Emmanuel Lépine, grips Pierre Charpentier, Richard Bonin; post-p.d. Jacques Bonin, Suzanne Dusault; unit pub. Danielle Papineau-Couture. Col. 35mm, running time: 87 mins. p.c. Les Films Vision 4 Inc., L'Office National du Film du Canada. With the financial participation of: Téléfilm Canada, La Société générale du cinéma du Québec, and the collaboration of La Société Radio-Canada. Can.dist. Vivafilm (514) 931-2500. Foreign sales Films Transit (514) 527-9781 l.p. Marie Tifo, Pierre Curzi, Jacques Godin, Robert Gravel, Jean-Louis Millette, Yvan Ponton, Eric Brisebois, Jacques Lussier.

photo: Joanne Hovey

elements, which work to create an appearance of integrity and seamless purpose. Thus, political change and social progress are also like (and this is the crux of the allegory) art itself, and particularly music, which also builds harmony out of disparity.

Thus musical production plays a prominent role as both a complement and catalyst to the action, particularly in the form of a young woman (Sandy Horne of *The Spoons*) who writes and performs compositions for guitar and synthesizer. Her attempts to build harmony out of divergent aural elements and styles are interwoven with the various social factions' attempts to confront the impending economic apocalypse (in what is an ultimately unnecessary diegetic explanation for her presence, she is introduced as the union activist's daughter). It is, I think, telling in terms of the film's romantic but engaging political concerns that the actual climax and resolution of the narrative consists of an artistic rather than political reconciliation. The wandering poet-musician, who has been nurtured back to creative activity (he learns synthesizer) by the young woman, is seen in the final moments of the film — which follows the public exposure of Shadow's scheme — performing with her at the same tavern the workers frequent. The song is recognizable to us as the final mix of many congruent themes and melodies we've seen and heard being composed throughout *Listen to the City*. In itself a marvelously economic and effective crystallization of the film's harmony-through-disparity ideology, Mann pushes this perfect moment of narrative closure right through the other side back into the open: as the song is performed, the camera tracks back to reveal, well, **everything** — the director, the crew, sound equipment, camera and dolly — essentially all the disparate mechanical and human bric-a-brac that comprises the apparent formal "harmony" of film.

At once, it is both an evocative and profoundly modest moment: not only does it remind us that every finished work requires the efforts of many to get finished, it emphasizes the tentative and relative nature of political prescription itself. When that camera moves back to reveal its own means of illusion, its organs, so to speak, the film also admitting the subjective nature of its own politics, the specificity of its point of view. It's saying, with a frankness and humility uncommon in the realm of political proselytism, "Well, that's the way I see it, anyway."

Here's hoping more people see it any way. Period.

Geoff Pevere •

Charles Jarrott's
The Boy In Blue

At the time of his death in 1983, director John Trent had spent some time working on an idea for a feature film about Ned Hanlan (1855-1908), the greatest sculler of his day. Before the rise of team sports in the late nineteenth century, competitive rowing was the great event in most waterfront communities in Canada, America, Britain and Australia. Hanlan was a legend in his time, praised to the skies by the press for his prowess on the water. Whatever Trent may have planned to celebrate Hanlan, it can't have been *The Boy in Blue*, the John Kemeny production whose opening in Toronto in January had film reviewers Scott, Harkness, Kirkland and Base rushing to outdo each other in creating new synonyms for crap.

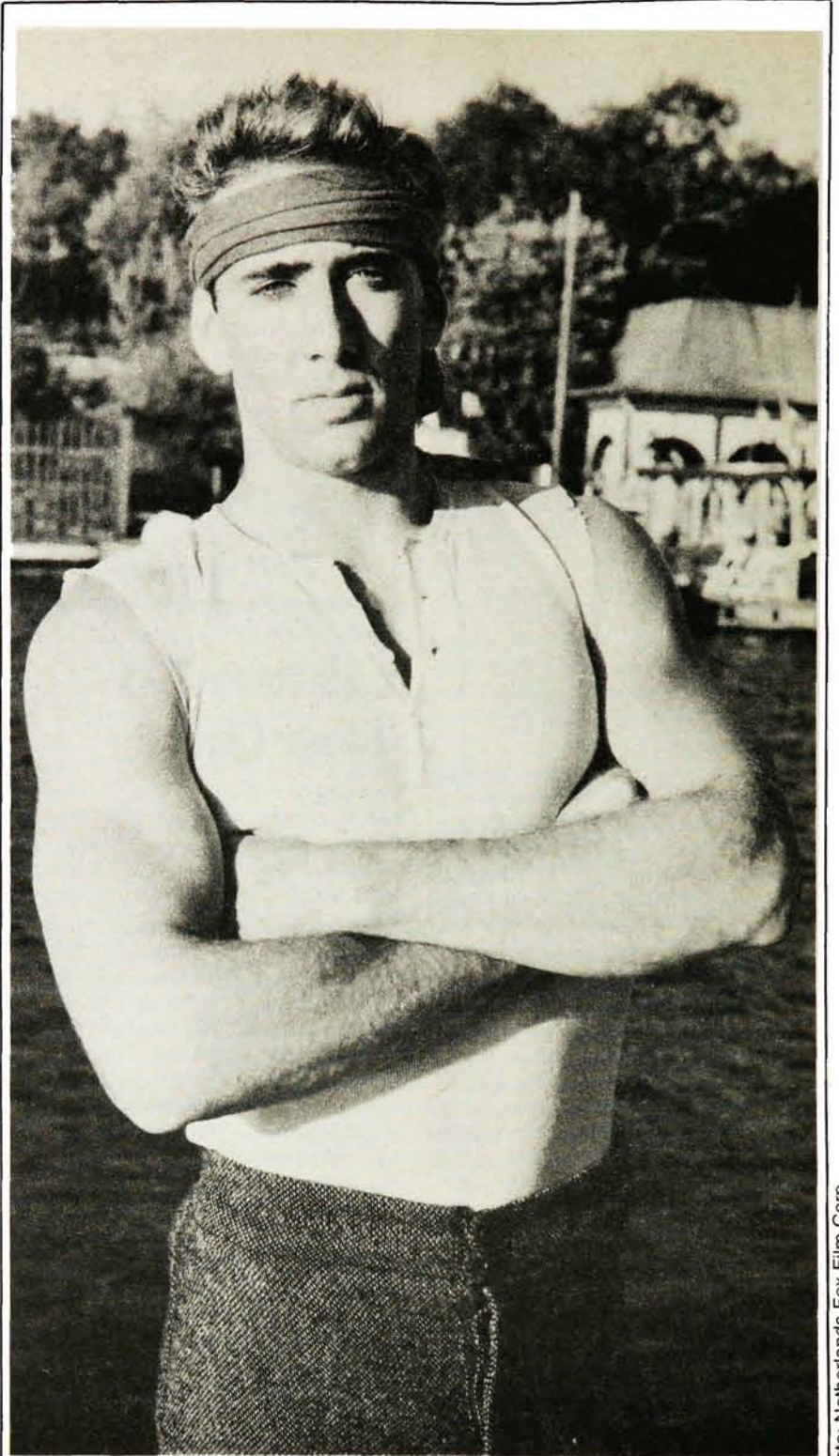
Ned Hanlan (Nicholas Cage) is first seen in 1876, living on the west end of Toronto Island (which was later named for him). After winning a race in the harbour against Bill McCoy (David Naughton), he sets off to deliver some of his moonshine, only to be surprised by the police. Anxious to get out of town quickly, he accepts Bill's offer to go to Philadelphia and compete in the Centennial Regatta. Hanlan defeats the American champion Fred Plaisted, and returns to Toronto a hero.

Seeing the potential and possibility of profit in the young oarsman, Colonel Alexander Knox (Christopher Plummer), a wealthy sportsman and gambler, offers to manage Ned's career. Ned is reluctant to dump Bill, but is smitten by Margaret Sutherland (Cynthia Dale), the colonel's niece. After many trials and tribulations, in which Knox and Hanlan fall out, and Margaret is forced to choose between Ned and the rich Harvard man her uncle prefers, Ned triumphs, marries Margaret, and defeats the Australian Edward Trickett to become world champion.

Strange to say, there are some elements of truth in the shopworn and gooey plot which Douglas Bowie (*Empire Inc.*) has constructed. Hanlan did indeed do some bootlegging, but it was to help his father's hotel, as the civic authorities would not extend his liquor permit. He did win his first international match in 1876 against Plaisted and the world championship against Trickett in 1880. And Hanlan's wife was named Margaret Sutherland.

That, however, is about it. In a central point in the plot of the film, Hanlan rams his opponent in Boston in 1878. This did happen, though against Plaisted instead of Trickett, but Hanlan was not barred from competition. (A race he had a year later in Washington saw more sculduggery than anything concocted for the film). Nor did Hanlan's financial backers desert him. In fact, they had backed him even before he first went to Philadelphia. The characters of Knox and McCoy are fictional.

Perhaps some originality of direction could have negated the melodramatic



• Typical American biopic hunk: Nicolas Cage as *The Boy In Blue*'s Ned Hanlan

blarney of Bowie's script. But it would be too much to expect such from Charles Jarrott. Nothing in his previous work of stodgy history (*Anne of the Thousand Days*), blowsy trash (*The Other Side of Midnight*), failed musical (the 1973 version of *Lost Horizon*), overblown thriller (*The Amateur*) or limp spoof (*Condorman*), would suggest it.

Thus, we get the predictable borrowings. From the *Rocky* films comes the underdog getting his shot, the sweaty training, and the triumphant music. From *Chariots of Fire* comes the notion of the outsider who challenges the effete establishment. The nostalgic glow recalls the Australian film *Phar Lap*, and, as an added bonus, the Ned-Bill relationship has distinct echoes of *The Sting*.

There is not much to cheer about regarding the performances either. Although he is physically able to handle the part of Hanlan, Nicolas Cage remains too much the contemporary

American hunk to convincingly portray the nineteenth-century Irish-Canadian. For some reason, he never wears Hanlan's characteristic moustache. Christopher Plummer's Knox is in the same mode of the villains he played in *Somewhere in Time* and *Highpoint*, cardboard stereotypes of the rich. David Naughton's Bill is forgettable. Only Sean Sullivan, in what was his last role, makes any real impression. He plays Walter Brown, whose invention of the sliding sculling seat contributed much to Hanlan's victories, with characteristic dignity.

Of the two female leads, Cynthia Dale deserves more respect than she has received. She attempts to give some depth and comic flair to Margaret, though she is thoroughly hampered by the anachronistic behaviour which Bowie gives to her and to Cage. Melody Anderson, who plays Ned's early girlfriend Dulcie, is not so lucky. The comic sex scene between Dulcie and Ned is the most jarring anachronism of all. It belongs in

LISTEN TO THE CITY d./p. Ron Mann sc. Ron Mann and Bill Schroeder orig. story Bill Schroeder ed. Elaine Foreman d.o.p. René Ohashi art d. Barbara Dunphy sd. David Joliat mus. Gordon Deppe perf. by Sandy Horne assoc. p./p.man. Colin Brunton a.d./p.coord. Peter Wintonick cast. Elliott Lefko lighting Jock Brandis asst to p./unit pub. Elliott Lefko stock footage National Film Board of Canada comp. grafix Alan Winters All Music Copyright Spoons Music Inc. 1984. Sphinx Productions gratefully acknowledge the importance of the ideas of Frithjof Bergmann to the production of this film. For further reading, see *On Being Free* (Notre-Dame University Press, 1977) and *The Future of Work*, Praxis Intern (1983). p.c. Sphinx Productions. Col. 90 minutes dist. International Spectrafilm Dist., Inc. l.p. P.J. Soles, Michael Glassbourg, Sandy Horne, Jim Carroll, Barry Callaghan, Sky Gilbert, Mary Hawkins, Real Andrews, Gary Augustynck, Peter Wintonick, Bill Lord, Gigi Guthrie, Peter Griffen, Geets Romo.

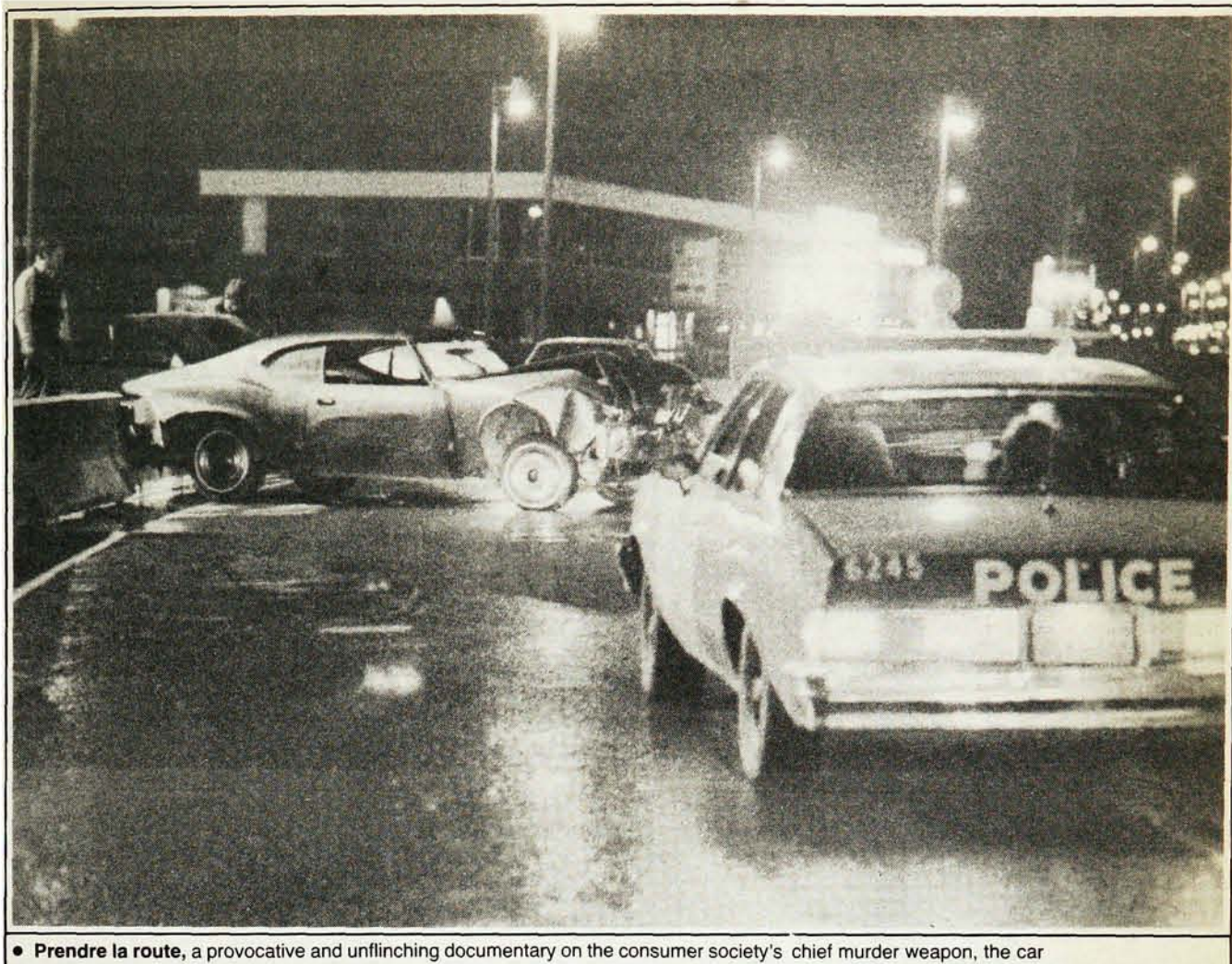
photo: Netherlands Fox Film Corp.

Porky's.

Pierre Mignot's photography is one of the few pluses of *The Boy in Blue*, but its effect is negated by the clumsy staging that Jarrott resorts to. The races were shot in Muskoka and on the Rideau Canal and were cut in such a way that the speed and grace of sculling is hardly evident (the resort to slow motion does not help). Hanlan inevitably outstroked the field, but the script, in its clumsy attempt to make him the underdog, show him winning by a hair.

It is not the habit of Canadians to unabashedly celebrate their heroes, in sports or any other endeavor. The adulatory sports biopic of the Americans is not to be found in this country. Rather, Canada has produced the more subdued *Terry Fox Story* and *The Hounds of Notre Dame*. In fictional films, the dark side of sports as seen in *Paperback Hero* and *Blood and Guts* was only reflected in the States in Michael Ritchie's early films, or Martin Scorsese's *Raging Bull*. By shamelessly apeing the retrogressive aspects of the sports movie, as embodied in Stallone's *Rocky* sequels, *The Boy in Blue* does a disservice to Ned Hanlan's remarkable talent, and, despite the dedication, the memory of John Trent.

J. Paul Costabile •



• *Prendre la route*, a provocative and unflinching documentary on the consumer society's chief murder weapon, the car

photo: Earl Harvey

THE BOY IN BLUE d. Charles Jarrott p. John Kemeny exec.p. Steven North CBC p.exec. David Peers sc. Douglas Bowie, from an original idea by John Trent d.o.p. Pierre Mignot cam.op. Andy Chmura asst.cam. Jean Lepine 1st asst.cam. 2nd unit Daniel Vinclette 2nd asst.cam. main unit Christiane Guernon 2nd asst.cam., 2nd unit Normand Belair stills Takashi Seida stills trainee Roger Dufresne p.des. William Beeton asst.art d. Dominique Ricard, Charles Dunlop art d.co.ord. Barbara Shrier set dec. Jean-Baptiste Tard asst. Michele Forest set dresser Norman Sarrazin asst. Paul Hotte ed. Rit Wallis cutters Mirielle Tremblay, Maggie Ewing sd.op. Daniel Latour boom Peter Kelly key grip Emmanuel Lepine grips Jean-Louis Daoust, Jean-Paul Auclair, Eloi Deraspe gaffer Jacques Fortier elect. Jean Trudeau swing Borek Sedivek best boy Gilles Fortier gen.op. Duane Gullison props Serge Bureau asst.props Denis Hamel props buyer Catherine Didelot cost.des. John Hay asst.cost.des. Renée April ward.co-ord. Blanche Boileau ward.master,extras Luc Le Flaguais dresser Christine Grenier ward.assts. Susan Hall, Luc Beland, Craig Grills, Mario Davignon, Francesca Chamberland, Caterina Chamberland, Debra Raffey hair Aldo Signoretti, Gaétan Noisieux assts. Claude Ménard, Nicole Pelletier, Kenneth Halliwell, Carol Doyon wigs Rachel Tremblay makeup artists Brigitte McCaughy, Maurizio Silvi makeup Mikie Hamilton, Diane Gautier, Charles Carter, Jocelyn Brunet, Corrine Joudiou; cont. France LaChapelle mus. Roger Webb mus.ed. Drew King Foley S & F Company re-rec. David Appleby, Don White sd.ed. John Kelly assts. Richard Kelly, Jane Tattersall; draughts. Michael Devine scenic artist Reet Puhm painters Barbara Jones, Sara Hugues const.coord. Rejean Brochu carp. Michel Brochu buyer Helene LaFrance swing gang Jacques Belair, Claude St-Onge, Claude Poirier; sculping trainer Atalbio Magioni Key wrangler Fred Larsen transp.coord. John Scott p.man. Stephane Reichel asst. Victoria Barney p.office co-ord. Marie Beaulieu p.act. Wilma Palm bookkeeper Kathryn Potter cast. Mike Fenton, Jane Feinberg, Valerie Mas-salas; cast.loc.Mtl. Arden Ryshpan cast.Tor. Deirdre Bowen assoc.p. Paulo de Oliveira asst. to p. Betsy Manheimer asst. to d. Margot Webb a.d. Jacques Methe (1st), Madeleine Henric (2nd), Judi Kemeny, Jacques Laberge (3rd); p.e. I.C.C.-Regatta Productions in association with the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. with the participation of Telefilm Canada. Col. De-luxe, 35mm running time: 93 minutes dist. 20th Century-Fox Lp. Nicolas Cage, Christopher Plummer, Cynthia Dale, David Naughton, Sean Sullivan, Melody Anderson, James B. Douglas, Walter Massey, Austin Willis, Philip Craig, Robert McCormick, Tim Weber, George E. Zecman, Geordie Johnson, Brian Thorne, Don MacQuarrie, James Edmond, Greg Swanson, Gerald Isles, J. Gordon Masten, Bruce McFee, Doris Malcolm, Ian D. Clark, Jeff Wincott, Aiden Devine, Lee Max Walton, Roger A. McKeen, Kim Coates, Ted Dykstra, Michel Perron, Bob Bainborough, John Dunn-Hill, Philip Nelson, Germain Beauchamp, Eric Pink, Patrick Sinclair, Elizabeth Rukavina, Ian Health, Jane Dickson, Claude Rae, Peter Peer, Doug Lennox, Dave De Sanctis, Ken Rogers, Barry Edward Blake, Anne Far-quar, Art Grosser, Paul Craig, Teddy Donville, Gorman Miller, Diane Hollingsworth, Graham MacReady, Graham Haley, John Cain.

Michel Poulette,
Paul Cowan, Raoul Fox &
Ken McCready's

Prendre la route

"Of all the consumer goods we purchase, including guns, the automobile is the most likely to kill or cause serious injury," states Pierre Nadeau, host of the four-part television series entitled *Prendre la route*, aired on Radio-Canada from Jan. 19-Feb. 9. Conceived by Idéacom inc., a Montreal production company, the \$2 million dollar budget series was assembled with the help of NFB, Téléfilm Canada and Société Radio-Canada funds. Using a documentary style, *Prendre la route* examines why preventative measures have failed to improve highway safety.

Since the mid-70s, television has repeatedly called attention to highway safety but the results have often been alarmist, unfocused and little able to change public opinion. Programs such as the questionnaire style of CTV's *Take The Test* were self-defeating, particularly in their use of humour. Families directly affected by highway accidents have had to wait nearly a decade to notice a change in public opinion.

Given their emotionally-charged situations, the events depicted in *Prendre la route* were tempered with restraint, distance and intelligence. In fact, the series was kindly lacking in the gratuitous shock value of roadside carnage and death.

The most effective and saddening program in *Prendre la route* was the series' second episode "Sous le coup du

choc." Shot over a six-month period at the University of Maryland's Trauma Centre in Baltimore, the program almost guaranteed shocking and disturbing footage because the Trauma Centre specializes in treating accident victims whose chances for survival are slim to none. Sequences shot in operating rooms were intercut with on-the-spot interviews of doctors and families.

With footage shot by cameraman Mike Mahoney, director Paul Cowan manipulated his material with care and control. Cowan is no stranger to strong and controversial subject matter. His filmography includes the Billy Bishop documentary *The Kid Who Couldn't Miss* (1982), a documentary on Middle East military strategies entitled "The Deadly Game Of Nations" (1982), (part of Gwynne Dyer's *War* series), and *Democracy On Trial: The Morgenthau Affair* (1984).

In "Sous le coup du choc," Cowan deploys a provocative and unflinching documentary style to depict the lives of individuals who represent only a fraction of the quarter-million accident victims reported each year in the United States. At times, the viewer is pushed well past the limits of mere observation.

Mike Swick, a 26-year-old motorcyclist, is rushed to the Trauma Centre, accompanied by his wife, Ginny. Swick is paralyzed from the waist down and has lost all bodily functions. At this point, Cowan shifts the narrative line to Swick's wife, Ginny, and begins to detail her unflagging optimism. Despite Ginny's patience and care, Mike Swick's single triumph is the ability to move his eyelids.

In this episode, the viewer's empathy extends equally to the victim, the family and the doctors of the Centre. During interviews, doctors admit to difficulty when they have to discuss death or in-

jury with a member of the family. Often, the future of a patient is beyond the doctor's (or filmmaker's) control. Take John and Debbie Boyd, a married couple who were severely injured in a motorcycle accident. Following a brief period of guilt over the accident, John Boyd quickly recovers from his injuries and returns to work. The future of the Boyd's marriage is evident in a reaction shot of Debbie early in the program. As her husband eagerly declares his intention to drive a motorcycle again, Debbie turns to the camera in horror. John eventually asks for a divorce.

The most difficult scenes to watch in "Sous le coup du choc," involve Mike Hall, a 19-year-old motorcyclist who suffers severe brain damage. With fear and disbelief, Hall often faces the camera and cries like a baby. Hall's bitterness and frustration have a palpable quality that is both disturbing and poignant. During an interview, Hall's mother recalls their first Christmas together after the accident. "I asked him what he wanted for Christmas," she says. "He told me he wanted a gun, so he could blow his brains out."

In "L'Inconduite," the first episode in *Prendre la route*, Pierre Goupil and Michel Brunet, two policemen from the Sûreté du Québec, discuss their role in maintaining safe highway conditions. Shot during a three-month period, director Michel Poulette and cameraman André Jean accompany the two cops on routine calls, often filming from the back seat of the police cruiser. In one sequence, a suspected drunk driver sits quietly in the back seat of the cruiser. After admitting that he had three beers, a bottle of wine with dinner and a digestive, he casually inquires about the presence of the film crew. Suddenly realizing his admission of guilt, he turns and scowls at the camera. One wonders if

he signed a release form, allowing his picture to be used in the program.

Here too the observational camera retains an immediacy and mobility that one would expect only from video. Identifying and tracing suspects both underlines the immediacy of the program and reinforces the fact that, at one time or another, we have all broken the law.

In "L'Inconduite," legal opinions expressed by the constables or Sergeant Gilles Frigon, head of the Montreal division of highway safety, are supported by the documentary footage. The most striking example is the dialogue between Agent Brunet and a driver who skidded out of control. While the two men talk, we watch a sequence (shot by a surveillance camera) of the man's car as it swerves around, crashes into a guardrail and explodes.

Later, Brunet describes how public fascination with highway accidents often leads to further incidents. As Brunet points to the accident, a tremendous crash is heard. Two cars collide, after having slowed down to view the accident. Moments later, another crash is heard. The camera swings wildly to the left. A third car has just crashed into the rear of Brunet's police cruiser.

Although Goupil and Brunet appear to be two nice guys just trying to do their job, their willingness to increase police surveillance has to be questioned. If they are so concerned with reducing the number of drunk drivers on the road, why did the Quebec police force refuse to go along with the rest of Canada on last December's R.I.D.E. program?

At times, guilt is problematic, especially the accident sequence involving a transport trailer loaded with heavy paper rolls. Interviews with a news cameraman, a press photographer and a highway analyst all stress the same point. Accidents involving transport trailers have occurred numerous times at the same intersection and nothing has been done by the Ministry of Highways to provide adequate warning to drivers. Ironically, the importance for public awareness is clear in the number of insurance and safety groups who helped finance **Prendre la route**: the Insurance Bureau of Canada, the Automobile Insurance Group, the Institute for Highway Safety, the Régie de l'assurance automobile du Québec, Justice Canada and Transport Canada. Implicit in **Prendre la route** is the fact that insurance rates have soared due to the public's indifferent attitude toward highway safety, particularly as regards the pathetic behaviour of drunk drivers.

In "Facultés affaiblies," the third program in the series, director Paul Cowan depicts the story of two men accused of impaired driving causing death. In Kentucky, 33-year-old Elmer Ratliff is further charged with two counts of premeditated murder. Ratliff had faced 14 previous charges of drunk driving. In Ohio, 17-year-old Kevin Cogan, a first offender, also faces two counts of vehicular homicide. To balance the program, Cowan introduces Judge Emmett O'Farrell, a man little concerned with leniency or personal popularity. Stiff fines and long jail-terms handed down by Judge O'Farrell have reduced the alcohol-related death rate in his county from 21 to three in a single year.

What is clear in "Facultés affaiblies" is that premeditated murder is more in keeping with the nature of the crime. In the United States, to drive while intoxicated constitutes a refusal to consider beforehand the consequences of one's actions. A similar amendment was passed in Canada last December 4. As one judge explains, "Too many people have seen first-hand the effects of highway fatalities by drunk drivers."

In spite of its complex legal jargon, "Facultés affaiblies" draws the viewer smoothly into the public issue of highway accidents with dramatic courtroom testimony and an emphasis on the emotional aftermath of the families involved. The immediacy of the courtroom scenes is highlighted in the occasional rack focus and shaky camera work. Cowan emphasizes the usual courtroom manoeuvres, such as the defence lawyer's argument that the deaths were accidental, the use of plea bargaining and, meanwhile, the anguish of the victim's family. As the cases unfold, real feelings of anger and revenge invariably lead to helplessness. When the verdict is read, reaction shots of the family engage the viewer in a serious moment of contemplation.

Implicit in "Facultés affaiblies" is a cause-and-effect relation between social conditioning and the problem of drunk drivers. Until recently, the consumption of alcohol has been an acceptable form of behaviour but society has had to change the way in which it handles drunk drivers.

If the first three programs utilize *cinéma direct* style to depict three levels of extreme emotion, the fourth episode, "Routes à suivre," draws from existing situations (such as the trial of Kevin Cogan) and presents its conclusions in a subjective, editorial manner. For a topic that is prone to morose contemplation, directors Raoul Fox and Ken McCready depict highway safety in "Routes à suivre" as a positive, action-oriented issue that should concern both the individual and the legal system.

Although the automobile is an historical and "democratic" device that offers the individual a choice in travel, mobility and a status-symbol of wealth and power, the automobile is also a weapon in hands of the driver who does not obey highway safety. The underlying theme of "Routes à suivre" is the responsibility of the public and legal sector, automobile manufacturers and the individual. Hit by numerous and expensive lawsuits by individuals in the last few years, both the public and the legal system have finally realized that a lower highway-mortality rate must include improvements in road construction and better visibility of road signs. Footage of drivers who make illegal U-turns or turn without activating their signal lights clearly indicates that better visibility of road signs is only half the answer.

With information submitted by automobile manufacturers, scientists and insurance companies, "Routes à suivre" comes down hard on drunk drivers (who cause over half of all accidents) and advocates the use of seat belts and strict enforcement of the 55 m.p.h. speed limit. Tests being conducted in the United States prove that a young driver may lack experience, but an older driver undergoes a decrease in reflexes. Clearly, the human factor is the hardest to control.

Although each episode is designed to stand on its own in form, content and style, the scope of **Prendre la route** expands from hospital drama in "Sous le coup du choc," highway safety in "L'Inconduite," drunk drivers in "Facultés affaiblies," and, finally, the improvement of highway safety in "Routes à suivre." emphasizes that the scientific knowledge and intelligence that was applied to the invention of the automobile is, today, applied to the improvement of safety and preventative measures.

The Series' producers are already looking into the possibility of an English-language version of **Prendre la route** for the CBC. The CBC's decision to buy the series will be conditional on available air time and to audience reaction in Quebec. Audience figures for **Prendre la route**'s first program surpassed one million viewers. (The audience of **Les Beaux Dimanches**, the Sunday evening slot in which the series ran, is usually half that number.

Prendre la route also received positive reaction from the Quebec media, including newspaper and radio editorials that praised its intelligent treatment of the subject. Rarely does a television documentary provoke that kind of comment.

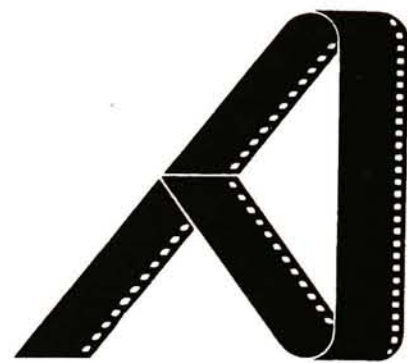
Ed Matthews ●

PRENDRE LA ROUTE - "L'INCONDUITE" d. Michel Poulette res.&sc. Helene Tirole, Bernard Dancereau, Michel Poulette, interviews André Jean cam. François Beauchemin cam.asst. Claude Brasscur add.cam. David De Volpi, Martin Leclerc, asst. Michel Motard sd. Raymond Marcoux, Richard Bessé, André Houlier stunts Dave Rigby mus. Richard Grégoire ed. Monique Turcotte Fr.adapt. Robert Verge, Publicité inc. mus.ed. Julian Olson sd.ed. André Galbrand asst. Pierre Béland sd.efx. Vital Milette cont. Chantal Francke p.asst. Luc Martineau mix Jean-Pierre Joutel, Adrian Croll, opening seq. Raoul Fox, Ken McCready, anim. Sidney Goldsmith unit admin. Diane Bergeron, Carmel Kelly, series res. Marie-Eve Thibault p. Jacques Nadeau, George Pearson line p. Sam Grana series p. Jacques Nadeau, Jean-Guy Jacques exec.p. Jacques Nadeau, Barrie Howells. With the financial participation of: Bureau d'assurance du Canada, Groupement des assureurs automobiles, Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, Justice Canada, Régie de l'assurance automobile du Québec, Transports Canada, p.c. Ideacom Inc. and Office National du Film du Canada with the collaboration of Société Radio-Canada and Téléfilm Canada. Col. 16mm.

"SOUS LE COUP DU CHOC" d./sc. Paul Cowan asst. Mike Mahoney ed. Judith Merritt cam. Paul Cowan, Mike Mahoney sd. John Martin mus. Alex Pauk, Zina Louie narr. Pierre Nadeau sd.ed. Jackie Newell mus.rec. Louis Hone mus.ed. Julian Olson mix Jean-Pierre Joutel, Adrian Croll Tnx to: John & Debbie Boyd, Mike & Ginny Swick, Mike & Pat Hall, Leslie & Linda Brumagin, Dr. Alasdair Conn, Jane Gerber, Bernice Wolfson, Marialis Zmuda, Jerry Huesman, as well as the nursing and support staff of the Baltimore Trauma Centre.

"FACULTES AFFAIBLIES" sc./d. Paul Cowan asst. Mike Mahoney ed. Margaret Wong asst. Stephan Reizes cam. Paul Cowan, Mike Mahoney sd. John Martin mus. Alex Pauk, Zina Louie narr. Pierre Nadeau Fr.adapt. Robert Verge, Publicité inc. sd.ed. Jackie Newell mus.rec. Louis Hone mus.ed. Diane Le Floch mix Jean-Pierre Joutel, Adrian Croll. Sincere thanks to the Perkins family, Larry Webster, the Bernside family, the Woprice family, Judge Emmett O'Farrell.

"ROUTES À SUIVRE" d. Raoul Fox, Ken McCready, loc.d. Robert Fortier cam. Barry Perles, Savas Kalogeras add.cam. François Beauchemin, Andrew Kitzanuck assts. Rick Bujold, Simon Leblanc p.asst. Toivo Van de Water sd. John Martin, Raymond Marcoux elect. Claude Deraspé ed. Raoul Fox asst. André Chaput commentary Ken McCready narr. Pierre Nadeau Fr. adapt. Robert Verge, Publicité inc. sd.ed. Wojtek Klis, John Knight mus.ed. Diane Le Floch mix Jean-Pierre Joutel, Adrian Croll. Tnx: Dr. Marc Dan-cose, Donald Freedman, L'Académie de conduite défensive d'orange county, La compagnie General Motors, L'école de contrôle du dérapage Petro-Canada, L'Hôpital Sacré-Coeur, L'Institut de recherche sur les transports de l'Université du Michigan, Le Ministère des Transports des Etats-Unis, Le Musée Henri Ford.



Five people spending up to 10 hours a day in a National Film Board theatre for five days straight watching, for the most part, a Sony Trinitron might seem like an updated version of Sartre's **No Exit** But in the company of one's co-jurors (David Scorgie of Alberta Culture, Vancouver d.o.p. Doug McKay and Robin Jackson of the federal department of Communications in Ottawa) the experience was not only pleasant but, given Canadians' notorious cultural contentiousness, astonishingly harmonious. A personal thank you here to Lyn Miller and Rob White of AMPIA for their kindness above and beyond the call of duty.

The 85 films and videos entered spanned the range from 30-second commercials to features and included techniques from gritty hand-held to high professionalism. Above all, for their unself-conscious celebration of contemporary Alberta, the entries as a whole were yet another visible reminder that, while federal film policy continues to chase its tail, it is Canada's regional film industries, despite being unrecognized and under represented, that have quietly managed to reflect the realities of Canadian life today. Like Quebec's **Rendez-vous du cinéma québécois**, the AMPIA fest showcases a cinema aware of its contexts, proud of its roots, and, perhaps surprisingly, in spite of historically founded recriminations, confident of its future.

What follows, then, are brief reviews of the best films and tapes of AMPIA's '86 Festival. (For space reasons I cannot include the 10 other titles that received honourable mention.)

To Set Our House In Order d. Anne Wheeler p.c. NFB, NW Studio/Atlantis. 30 mins. 16mm

A tightly controlled adaptation of the Margaret Laurence story about a young girl's discovery of previously concealed information concerning the death of her uncle in the First World War and the emotional pain it continues to cause her family — so much so that she begins to question the benevolence of God's order. Anne Wheeler's almost classic study of the underpinnings of Canadian repression is a model in the by now highly perfected Atlantis/NFB series of half-hour dramatic films anthologizing Canadian literature. With excellent performances from Tom Heaton, Doris Petrie and young Josephine Stebbings. *Best Drama under 30 Minutes, Best Director Dramatic, Best Script Dramatic (Wheeler), Best Art Direction (John Blackie), and Best Actress (Stebbing).*