

The first three volumes (A through G) of **The Motion Picture Guide**, a 12-volume encyclopedia covering all English-language theatrical films since 1927, have been issued. Expertly edited by Jay Robert Nash and Stanley Ralph Ross, they include over 9,000 titles, with plot synopses, critical evaluations, full credit lists, production data, year of release, awards, cassette availability, and extended factual and historical data – the latter a distinctive feature of this scholarly collection (*Bowker/Cinebooks*, NYC, \$75/ea., \$750/set).

Published by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the **1985 Annual Index to Motion Picture Credits** provides a full production personnel roster of 347 feature-length films qualifying for Academy Awards. A 1976-85 cumulative list of film titles has been added. Meticulously edited by Ms. Byerly Woodward, it is an authoritative

## BOOKSHELF

by George L. George

record, invaluable for scholarly research (*AMPAS, Beverly Hills, CA, \$80, \$60 to subscribers*).

A detailed study of the 1895-1949 growth of Hollywood cinematography knowledgeably documents the career of Sol Polito, a gifted cameraman prominent during the Golden Era. George A. Lazarou's **Images in Low Key** evaluates Polito's artistic and technical contribution to his craft, praising his sensitivity and resourcefulness, and his versatile use of mood photography (*Now, Voyager*), camera mobility (*Gold Diggers of 1933*), and stark documentary style (*I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*). (A few copies are available free to institutions from the

author, 10 Lamias St., Athens 115 23, Greece).

Graphic design for television has undergone remarkable expansion during recent years. The scope of its growth and potential are explored by specialists Ben Blank and Mario R. Garcia in a comprehensive survey of its art and technology, **Professional Video Graphic Design**. This practical text with its profusion of striking illustrations thoroughly covers conceptual design, typography, photography, sketching, and computer-generated graphics (*Prentice-Hall, NYC, \$29.95*).

Penny Junor's engrossing biography, **Burton: The Man Behind the Mask** is a discerning assessment of a gifted actor

who lived by his whims and finally destroyed himself (*St. Martin's, NYC \$15.95*).

In **The Nine Lives of Mickey Rooney**, Arthur Marx narrates the irrepressible comedian's roller coaster career and personal life, his eight marriages and even more numerous comebacks (*Stein & Day, NYC, \$17.95*).

Upbeat and sparkling, Michael Freedland's biography **Shirley MacLaine** chronicles the unconventional existence of the free-spirited dancer, singer, actress, author, and firm believer in reincarnation (*Merrimack/Salem, Topsfield, MA, \$17.95*).

Maxine Marx displays filial affection and understanding in **Growing Up with Chico**, an insightful evocation of life with father, the piano-playing member of the Marx Bros. (*Limelight, NYC, \$8.95*).

In May and June, a pair of student 16mm film screenings in Toronto were held at the Ontario Film Theatre, both with similar titles – the grandly announced "The Class of '86 Student Film Showcase." The Student Entry Project First Annual Gala Film Screening and Awards Night, and "The Graduating Class of 1986" of the Film Department of York University. Both displayed a wealth of talent.

Organized by The Student Entry Project, an independent consortium of Ontario college and university film programmers and the Ontario Production Studio of the NFB, the Student Film Showcase is designed to "highlight the talents of senior student filmmakers as they prepare to enter professional careers in the Canadian film community."

**BINARY BUCKS** (Neil Hollands, Sheridan College, Oakville was the Animation Category winner, earning himself a three-month paid apprenticeship with Atkinson Film Arts, Ottawa)

A thick-eared construction worker tries to explain how computers function. His simple-minded approach is supposed to be screamingly funny – it is not. The drawings are more than competent, the animation is limited, and the whole organization of the film is messy.

**IN CASE WE SURVIVE** (Glenn Warner, University of Windsor, was the Drama Category winner, getting \$2,500 in technical services)

A student moves to Windsor, and worries excessively about the infiltration of the U.S.A. into everyday life, while fraternizing with a professor's daughter. A slight drama, not strong on script.

**A KID FROM THE SUBURBS** (David Vallis, Humber College, Toronto, won in the Documentary Category winner, garnering \$2,500 in technical services)

An affecting, non-sentimental look at Randy, a 32-year-old AIDS victim, who copes on a day-to-day basis with the help of his lover, Tony. Literate, sad, sensible and caring – this

## MINI REVIEWS

by Pat Thompson

was easily the most mature and interesting film in the competition.

**SHE LEFT FOR WORK** (Jim Maunder, Ontario College of Art, Toronto, winner in the Experimental Category – \$2,500 in technical services)

A poem is recited on the soundtrack, and life and relationships are explored on screen, with a little "stick" animation thrown in. Not a pure experimental film, but it manages to sustain some interest.

The Graduating Class of '86 of the Film Department of York University put on a jam-packed evening of seven films, including a feature-length production, and the major portion of the funding for these projects was raised by the students.

### THE BOOK

Three lads find a book that tells the truth, and one asks about his father and wants to find him. The book informs the boy that his father does not love him, but he has to find out for himself. A soft little tale, nicely shot with three believable young boys, but the sound seemed fuzzy.

p./d. sc. Peter Geiger, cam. Voya Mikulic, ed. Gordon Creelman. orig. mus. Laurie Garbutt, 25 mins.

### THE INKWELL II

A young writer sits in a cafe. His fantasies of everyday life around him, which include the waitress and two young girls at one of the tables, come alive on the screen. A well-trieved plot device only partly comes off here.

p./d. Luc Chalifour, sc. Luc Chalifour/Pierre Careau, cam. Ed Bianchi, ed. Luc Chalifour/Marlon Moscal, 15 mins (approx.)

### PASSION AND GASOLINE

A morose young man with a dull life cruises around in his car and reads a newspaper until he gets the urge to "torch a building"... He finds a job in a meat market, and a girl working there comes to his warehouse home for dinner. When they try to rob the shop safe, she can't remember the

combination... The young man kills the store owner and torches his own car... A cool, laconic little thriller with a touch of macabre humour that comes off the screen very well.

p./d. sc. Mark Forler, cam. Paul Sarossy, ed. Peter Wittinger, 20 mins.

### THANATOS

Rick, a burglar, kills his partner for holding back on some jewels, and throws him into a pond. Haunted by the crime, Rick hallucinates and his dead partner appears everywhere – pale, damp and accusing. Eventually, Rick runs through the house trying to wipe out the image – and comes to a nasty end on the cellar steps. The story line could have been tighter, and the acting a bit better, but there's some nicely-timed genuine terror.

p./d. Stephen Roscoe, sc. Dave Rheame/Bernie Gauthier/Stephen Roscoe, cam. John Detwiler/Paul Boucher, mus. Composed/arranged/performed by Lazarus Varla, ed. Paul Boucher, 24 mins.

### DEAD FISH TELL NO TALES

Adrian lives at home, his mother nags, but his little sister understands him and pushes him to get a job. The job he gets – and mainly because he is tall and fits the costume – is that of a doorman at a nightclub. There Adrian stands on the sidewalk as Frankenstein's Monster complete with neck bolts. All unwittingly he acts as a delivery agent for cocaine and, one night, takes home an uncollected parcel. His little sister puts a package of the white stuff into the fish tank and they behave peculiarly: "Are they in heat?" – "No, not all at once!" Like all good tales, this one turns out OK in the end. A slight, giggly little piece, with some charmingly naive acting that carries it along at a good pace.

d. Susie Marucci, cam. Voya Mikulic/Rhett Morita, sc. Susie Marucci/Rhett Morita, ed. Dan Daniels, 17 mins.

### PLEROMA

An experimental film that, in spite of its short length, goes on far too long! Starting with black and white raindrops in extreme closeup interspersed with erotic flashes of colour, one's eyeballs soon beg for a rest. The images don't flow, and the electronic music doesn't help much. A film by John Detwiler & Renee Duncan, 9 mins.

### WELCOME TO THE PARADE

Michael doesn't get along with his father, the owner of a meat packing company, who expects him to work there after school. At home, things are tense with his parents, even though the father has given Michael a sporty car and an apartment in the basement of their large house.

Michael moves to downtown Toronto to live in a seedy hotel. He takes a job dishwashing in a nearby restaurant, but soon walks out. He finds that pushing drugs is far more lucrative and, through a hooker along the corridor, gets his supplies from the Iceman (a quirky performance here by Lee Harrison). Fast-talker that he is, he finally runs afoul of the Iceman who sends henchmen to beat him up. In the end, Michael returns home and to work at his father's meat packing plant.

Well now – the script is full of clichés... the hero loves his little brother and doesn't forget his birthday, buying him a huge stuffed animal... the hooker in his hotel has a heart of gold and longs to be with her three-year-old daughter... and so it goes. The alleged hero, Michael, is a whining, obnoxious, boring prick of 22 years that, as is said, only a mother could love.

However, all this aside, one has to admire the guts and determination of a filmmaker attempting a feature in his final year, raising the money, and actually getting the damned thing on the screen. Next time, a lot more work on the script, the characterization, the plot line... please!

p. Peter Gentile, d./sc./ed. Stuart Clarfield, cam. John Gajdecki/Jon Joffin, orig. mus. Rob Wright/Mark Lalama, 80 mins (approx.), l.p. Alan Powell (Michael Wiseman), Sam Powell, Linda Levine, Carol Kabrosso, and John Telewiak.