

Telefilm may lose \$17 million

MONTREAL — According to estimates in mid-January, Telefilm Canada will hold \$16.9 million in unspent funds at the end of the current fiscal year. Whether these funds must be returned to the government coffers or will remain available to Telefilm for production is the subject of current negotiations between the federal agency and the Treasury Board.

Yves Beauchesne, head of Administration at Telefilm, told *Cinema Canada* that while the budget of TF has risen by +5 percent this year (up to \$106,680,000 from last year's \$72,395,441), the industry is only growing at a rate of 33 percent and cannot produce enough to fully use the funds available.

(The rate of industry growth is based on the sum of all the budgets of projects accepted by TF in '85-'86 and '86-'87.)

According to Beauchesne, TF's net expenditures (including administrative costs, less revenues) from the Broadcast Fund will be \$57.8 million while \$37.3 million net was spent on feature films. Other net administrative costs are \$3.9 million. When total ex-

penditures of \$99.4 million are subtracted from the \$106.68 million available to TF in '86-'87, the unused portion of the funds coming from this year's operations is \$7.3 million.

An additional \$9.6 comes from funds rolled over from the '85-'86 financial exercise. TF may have to relinquish both sums if the Treasury Board decides so.

The agency would have had a larger pool of unused funds, had not two important projects come together in time to qualify for assistance this fiscal year. Beauchesne said that both the mega-project **Bethune** and the renewal of the series **He Shoots, He Scores** reduced the sum of unattributed funds from the \$25 million which had been rumoured in the press.

"We don't refuse that many projects," commented Beauchesne, insisting that proposals had to be "bizarre, crooked or borderline" to be turned down by Telefilm. In general, TF accepts two out of every three projects submitted to it, Beauchesne says, and almost every project refused is simply missing some elements necessary to its application.

"If there is any one factor which determines our participation in a project, it is the criterion of prime-time interest," a criterion dictated by the Broadcast Fund definitions, he maintains. "We tend to pull away from programs which wouldn't fit into prime-time viewing," he concludes.

Obviously, other criteria — financial, legal, content — are also examined at TF under the stewardship of Linda Beath in Toronto and Francine Forest in Montreal.

Less than a year after the much-heralded organizational restructuring at TF which created an Operations branch on the one hand (under André Picard) and a Business Affairs branch on the other (headed by Bob Linnell), TF has returned to the older geographical division of labour, funneling requests from Montreal and the east through Forest, and those from Toronto and the west through Beath. They are responsible for evaluating both the operational and business aspects of the projects. The administration of signed contracts will now be overseen by newcomer Larry Pilon. (see article, p. 44)

TVO French service

TORONTO — A flurry of calls from mystified television viewers greeted TVOntario switchboard operators as the public broadcaster's new French language network went to air Jan. 1, 1987.

In fact, many enquiries were received as changes were being made in the two days before the service went on air, said TVO's Kathleen Vaughan.

The calls ranged from angry enquiries about what had happened to the previous channel, bumped from the basic cable dial to make room for the new service, to messages of support, Vaughan said.

In the Toronto area cable companies bumped the American network NBC from basic cable service, which includes channels 2 to 13 on most televisions without converters, in order to comply with federal regulations.

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) requires

that Canadian channels receive priority over other channels.

To continue receiving NBC's Buffalo affiliate, Toronto area cable subscribers will have to buy a converter. The station moved to make room for the French network varies throughout Ontario.

Hugh Coulthard, Toronto area regional manager of Maclean-Hunter Cable TV, estimated the cable company initially received hundreds of calls per day following the start of the French network.

"The calls are still coming, but they're slowing down," Coulthard said during an interview one week after the new network, called *La chaîne française*, went on the air.

He said about 8-10 percent or 15,000 Maclean-Hunter subscribers owning a television without a converter would find themselves affected by the change.

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Consumers contest cable increases

OTTAWA — A major consumers' group is taking the federal broadcast regulator to court over its approval of automatic cable television rate increases.

The Consumers Association of Canada will contest the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) decision and a Maclean-Hunter Cable TV automatic rate increase application before the Federal Court of Canada.

Consumers association official David McKendry said his group feels the CRTC did not have the power to make that decision.

"We feel the commission did not have the jurisdiction in law to make the regulations that it did with respect to automatic rate increases."

He said it is a test case and if the consumers' association is successful with its case, all cable companies will have to go back to the old system of outlining rate increase applications before the CRTC.

The CRTC ruled on August 1, 1986 that cable companies could apply for automatic increases that can be the equivalent of up to 80 percent of the

previous year's consumer price index.

"We think that the commission is obligated in law to ensure that the rates are fair," said McKendry, who is director of the regulated industries section of the 160,000-member consumers' association.

He said with automatic increases the commission will not look at the underlying reasons for increases in cable television rates. The CRTC should examine costs, revenues, the quality of service and give subscribers an opportunity to comment on the increases they face, McKendry explained.

With automatic rate increases the customers only recourse is to disconnect or pay, he added.

He said the consumers' association decided to contest the Maclean-Hunter Cable TV application for its Guelph, Ontario operation for several reasons.

Maclean-Hunter applied for a rate increase in Guelph last year, but was denied an increase because it had high profits, McKendry said. Then after the CRTC handed down

its decision, it applied under the new regulations, he added.

Only a matter of weeks before the new regulations came into place, the CRTC found that Maclean-Hunter's rates in Guelph were high enough as it is, he said.

He also said Maclean-Hunter was one of the first companies to apply under the new regulations.

But McKendry said the consumers' association is not singling out Maclean-Hunter as being any worse or any better than any other cable system.

While a ruling in favour of the consumers' association will mean that cable companies will have to go back to applying for rate increases, that still doesn't mean the old system can't be improved, he said.

In an interview with *Cinema Canada* after the release of CRTC regulations last year, the vice-president of public affairs for the Canadian Cable Television Association applauded the move.

Susan Cornell termed the new rate system sensible and said it includes regulations for written notice to subscribers 40 days prior to the increase.

Dubbers win battle

OTTAWA — French-language television viewers will no longer have to wait six months to two years to watch the latest U.S. TV series dubbed in their own language.

High level negotiations between the federal department of communications, the Quebec government, American television distributors and both French and English-language television broadcasters have resulted in a landmark agreement which in effect recognizes a duality of dominant languages in Canada.

For the first time, an agreement between the department of Communications and the distributors, represented in Canada by the Canadian Motion Picture Distributors Association (CMPDA), has enabled French-language broadcasters to purchase first-run rights for U.S. TV series. French-language audiences will watch dubbed American programs at the same time as English-language audiences view the same programs on English Canadian networks.

Traditionally, the English Canadian networks were used to having total exclusivity of U.S. TV series for two runs and two years.

"This was an unfair and unacceptable situation," says Gilles Desjardins, vice-president corporate affairs of Le Groupe Vidéotron Ltée which recently

bid to purchase Télé-Métropole, Canada's largest French-language broadcaster.

"They are beginning to realize in the U.S. that there is a large French-language audience here," says Desjardins. "We were at a terrible disadvantage. It was not very interesting to watch the same **Dallas** episode that everyone had talked about two or three years ago."

Alain Gourd, deputy minister of Communications, says he commends the Screen Actors Guild for being the first to make an exception where residual rights are concerned for foreign languages which includes the French-language in Canada.

"The only way for the French-language broadcasters to broadcast immediately after the U.S. broadcast was to buy for English language and compete against CTV on a 25 million viewer basis," Gourd told *Cinema Canada*.

"It was a de facto impossibility for a French-language station to broadcast a U.S. TV series before two years had elapsed."

Although there were several weak series that gave French broadcasters a stronger negotiating position, Gourd, a broadcaster between 1973 and 1982 says he "cannot think of one example."

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Quebec/Europe station applies as specialty TV More money recommended for TF

OTTAWA — The best of Quebec and European French-language television programming will soon be available throughout Canada.

According to Alain Gourd, deputy minister of communications, a consortium of public and private broadcasters will file an application to the CRTC prior to the March 12 deadline for specialty services.

This consortium, consisting of every French-language broadcaster in Quebec as well as TVOntario, will establish TV5 in Canada — an existing international Francophone service distributed throughout Europe and originating in France.

Programming from France, Belgium, Switzerland and Quebec will be seen in Quebec on the basic cable service and on satellite to cable service throughout the rest of Canada.

Canadian participation in the service was agreed to in a protocol signed in early 1985 by the user countries and both the federal and Quebec governments.

In February 1986 at the Francophone summit in Paris, Canada proposed that the international Francophone service be distributed "step by step" throughout the world. North America was designated as the next step and Canada was mandated to achieve this goal, says Bourd.

"What we are trying to create is a Francophone audiovisual space," says Gourd.

Start-up funding for this full-fledged cable service will be contributed by the user countries. Gourd estimates that the initial Canadian contribution will be close to \$1 million.

MONTREAL — A new survey commissioned by Telefilm Canada has the executives there smiling. The DPA Group Inc. of Ottawa has reported great satisfaction in the private sector with the functioning of the agency, and has recommended that it be given additional funds — \$446 million over five years for the Broadcast Fund alone.

The report, written by DPA in conjunction with Secor of Montreal, was based on 150 questionnaires sent to TF's clients. It will be made public as soon as TF approves the text which accompanies its conclusions.

DPA found that funds disbursed by TF have a multiplying factor of 2.2 and that 75 percent of the projects funded by TF would not be undertaken at all without the help of the agency.

In commenting the results, TF administrator Yves Beauchesne said that TF is still in the business of taking risks.

"The projects which are expected to recoup their costs easily no longer come to Telefilm. We don't anticipate a lot in the nature of returns because Canadian programs and films can still not recoup in the Canadian market."

Beauchesne reported that the study also revealed a pro-regional bias, and he confirmed that TF tries to com-

pensate for the geographical difficulties of the regions by acting more quickly on requests from places other than Toronto and Montreal.

While TF, in principle, hopes to take only six weeks to process applications, Beauchesne reports that most projects currently take between seven and eight weeks to go through the system.

TVO French

cont. from p. 33

Many of those complaining said they felt there was no justification for another French channel in the Toronto market, he said. French station CBLFT, Channel 25, also serves Toronto.

Coulthard said, for example, some people complained of having to buy a convertor for a second television set in order that it could pick up the Johnny Carson show on NBC.

"They were angry that now they would have to put out money for an American channel." But Coulthard added that anytime changes are made the company receives public reaction.

Vaughan, TVO's manager of corporate promotions, said one week after the new service started things were just about

back to normal. Between Dec. 29, 1986 and Jan. 5, 1987 TVO received about 620 calls from the public about La chaîne française, Vaughan explained.

TVO received many calls from people who don't understand that Ontario has a large French-speaking population; when that fact was explained, they understood the need for the service, she said. Vaughan also said others called who were opposed to any French programming. But after one week of programming TVO was receiving as many congratulatory calls as complaints, she said.

The federal and provincial governments have each agreed to chip in \$3 million a year for the next five years to support the French network.

The service is geared to meet the needs about 500,000 Ontarians whose mother tongue is French and another 500,000 with a working knowledge of the language.

Dubbers win

cont. from p. 33

"What I can tell you," says Gourd, "is that when the eldest daughter on *Little House on the Prairies* was pregnant, on the French side she was still in bobby socks."

The agreement, explains Gourd, is the result of an initial outcry from French-language broadcasters to improve the quality and quantity of Francophone services in Canada.

Part of the result was a co-production film treaty with France, a review of broadcast fund criteria and the distribution in Canada of the International Francophone Service or TV5 (see story). French-language broadcasters insisted, however, that the only way to repatriate French-language audiences would be to translate foreign programming.

One obstacle towards stepping up the availability of U.S. programming, which turned out to be easier than expected, says Gourd, was the degree of complicity by the three major

English-language networks in Canada. The three network heads were confronted with the question by the CRTC during license renewal hearings in the fall.

"The CRTC was nice enough to ask the question, quite spontaneously," says Gourd, "and the the three network heads were nice enough to agree."

Both Desjardin and Gourd say that although the American decision is evident of a strong sense of fairness there are monetary advantages and political trade-offs involved in the deal.

"Now that we have more French stations competing for a better product it will be more costly and they will move their product faster," says Gourd.

On the political side Gourd says sensitivity on this issue can be seen as an antidote to a more adamant position against the regulation of U.S. film distribution in Quebec and the rest of Canada.

"This may be their way of telling us that they are not bad guys right across the board," says Gourd.

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Weak and ineffective: Quebec distribution deal studied

MONTREAL — The Quebec distributors have capitulated, giving up their strong protectionist stand concerning theatrical distribution in hopes of making greater gains in video distribution. This is the principal analytical conclusion drawn about the recent agreement signed between the Quebec government and the Motion Picture Export Association of America according to a study commissioned by Telefilm Canada.

Written by Michel Houle, the working document entitled "Analysis of the Oct. 22, 1986 Agreement between the minister of Cultural Affairs and the Motion Picture Export Association of America" (MPEAA) documents meticulously the effect the agreement would have had on theatrical distribution in Quebec had it been in place over the last several years. Echoing the opinion of *Cinema Canada* legal columnist Michael Bergman (No. 136-Update), Houle concludes that the agreement constitutes a bad deal, an unfortunate precedent, and an undefensible distortion of the intention of Bill 109, Quebec's Cinema Law.

The Law declared that only Quebec-based distributors which were Canadian-owned would be permitted to distribute films in Quebec. Exceptions would be made for American Majors, already active in Quebec, which were either the 'producer' of a film or which held 'world rights' to the distribution of a film. The agreement was made to define these terms.

The first chapter of the study constitutes a brief history of the Cinema Law while the second deals with the terms of the agreement, stressing the definitions of 'producer' and 'world rights' which are used to determine what companies may distribute theatrical films in the province (see *Cinema Canada*, No. 136-Update).

The broad definitions in the agreement "will not discriminate against the Majors nor keep them from distributing every film in Quebec which they distribute in the States," says Houle, adding that the definitions are "contrary to common sense and run counter to usual commercial practices."

A 'producer' of a film includes, for the purposes of the agreement, any member of the MPEAA which has spent 50 percent of the total funds in any given film or \$4.5 million Canadian on the film.

As for the owner of world rights, the agreement excludes consideration of the country of origin of a film, the country Houle considers the "most im-

portant" to determine the independent nature of a film.

In the third chapter, which examines the concrete effect of the agreement, Houle itemizes all films distributed by the Majors over the last five years, and analyzes what would have happened, had the agreement been in effect.

While he concludes that

most probably the Majors could have asked for a 'special permit' to distribute every film in question, thereby maintaining an absolute status quo, in a best-case scenario 10 films might have changed hands. The financial consequences would have been to affect 1-2 percent of the Majors' business dealings in the province, or 3.7

percent of the films they distribute.

In a fourth chapter dealing with the attitude of the Quebec distributors (who, as a group, have endorsed the agreement) Houle concludes that they simply lost faith in the will of the government to act.

Once free-trade negotiations

were opened and Quebec decided to develop the James Bay hydro project, he says the distributors recognized that the governments would rather negotiate than "irritate the American government" even though such negotiations

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NEWS

NFB FILMS HEADLINE CANADIAN SECTION OF U.S. FILM FEST

The NFB was involved in 13 of the 22 Canadian films of 1986 chosen by the U.S. Film Festival for a showcase entitled **Canada: The Next Wave**, an annual festival screening program featuring recent films of a country whose cinema is considered likely to become successful in America. (The 1986 festival featured Australian films.)

NFB productions and co-productions shown were: **90 Days**, **Pouvoir Intime**, **Sitting in Limbo**, **Final Offer**, **The Decline of the American Empire**, **Le Dernier glacier**, **Anne Trister** and **Richard Cardinal: Cry from a Diary of a Metis Child**. The NFB also provided assistance to five of the other films screened during the 10-day event: **My American Cousin**, **Next of Kin**, **Jacques et Novembre**, **Linda Joy** and **Stations**.

The festival, which was held in Park City, Utah, January 16-25, is sponsored by Robert Redford's Sundance Institute, a non-profit organization committed to developing new talent in independent film production in the U.S.A.

52 AWARDS

During the last three months of 1986, NFB films won 52 awards at 35 festivals around the world. In all, 129 films were screened at 16 European, eight Canadian, eight American, and two Brazilian festivals as well as at a festival in the Seychelles Islands.



• Lucie Laurier (left) and Louise Marleau in **Anne Trister** recently shown at the U.S. Film Festival and soon to be released theatrically across Canada

NFB FILMS POPULAR IN EUROPE, ASIA and SOUTH AMERICA

NFB productions continued to be in demand throughout the world in 1986. In **Europe**, NFB films reached viewers in two million homes in 14 European and North African countries through French-language telecasts on the satellite network TV-5. In addition, the Film Board entered into an agreement with the Milan-based Margy S.R.L. to distribute 200 titles in France, Italy and Spain. In Britain, BBC's Channel 4 purchased the four-part highway safety series **At the Wheel** and recently broadcast several animation films including **Lucretia**, **The Tender Tale of Cinderella Penguin**, **The Big Snit** and **Paradise**. **90 Days** was sold to theatri-

cal distributors in Australia and in several European countries. The film is now available in French, German, Swedish, Czech, Hungarian and Serbo-Croat.

South American school children are watching NFB films on video. Brazilian and Argentinian distributors recently purchased some 130 titles for educational video markets in the two countries.

Also in '86, the NFB made its first major sale for videodisc distribution in **Japan**. Down under, the seven-part **WAR** series was sold to **Australian** SBS TV while **New Zealand** Television purchased more than 30 NFB titles for broadcast.

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CRTC to maintain CanCon levels Pressured into sex stand

TORONTO — The federal broadcast regulator has backed off a proposal to reduce Canadian content levels for television during daytime broadcasting.

Last summer the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) proposed that under certain conditions television broadcasters be allowed to reduce daytime Canadian content levels from 60 to 50 percent.

The CRTC proposed the reduction provided broadcasters invested a proportion of gross revenues equal to their best 12-month performance in the last three years.

At a September 1985 hearing, industry support for the proposal was expressed, but so were ideas for changes and opposition, a CRTC statement reads.

The CRTC, as a result, decided to stick with the existing regulations except in the case of ethnic and remote stations.

The proposed reductions for daytime Canadian television would not have affected primetime (six p.m. to midnight) levels that are set at a 50 percent minimum for private broadcasters. Also, they would not have affected the CBC at all.

In its December announcement the commission said Canadian broadcasters must continue to make financial and program commitments for

quality Canadian shows at license renewal hearings.

The CRTC has also announced new "streamlined" television broadcast regulations. The commission says the new regulations eliminate outdated provisions, clarify others and provide a more "flexible regulatory framework."

CRTC chairman André Bureau said the new regulations bring the broadcast and cable television industries in-line with modern conditions.

"With this leaner, cleaner regulatory environment, the commission expects strong commitments from its licensees to produce and air distinctive, high-quality Canadian programming," Bureau said.

The CRTC says because it is adopting a more supervisory approach it expects the television industry to adopt codes for self-regulation in specified areas. These areas include advertising during newscasts, the use of subliminal advertising and television station contests.

Famous at Yorkdale Mall

TORONTO — Three new movie theatres were unveiled in December at the Yorkdale mall cinemas, one of Canada's first multi-screen movie complexes.

Famous Players Limited opened three new movie theatres at its Yorkdale Mall complex as part of a previously announced \$4 million expansion program in the Toronto area.

Under a two-phase program Famous Players added three theatres and refurbished its three other theatres at Yorkdale. Total seating capacity is increased to about 2,265 from 1,200.

The three new theatres have Dolby Sound and 20-foot high curved screens. Two of the three are equipped with 70mm projection equipment.

The Yorkdale theatres

opened in 1964 as a dual screen complex.

Famous Players plans to build 13 new screens in the Toronto area by the spring of 1987.

The Yorkdale theatres also have expanded concession stands and box offices as well as improved seating.

Walter Senior, chairman of Famous Players, said the Yorkdale theatre complex is an example of the high quality movie houses the Toronto-based firm intends to bring Canadians through its expansion and renovation programs.

Across Canada, Famous Players will build 11 new theatres with 60 screens by the end of the year. A press release states that another 50 to 60 screens will be constructed by 1990.

OTTAWA — Public pressure is what motivated the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) to take a stand against sexism on television and radio, says MP Lynn McDonald, NDP critic for communications and culture.

McDonald calls "praise worthy," the CRTC decision to dismiss self-regulation for hard and fast guidelines and a warning to broadcasters that portraying women in demeaning roles could, in extreme cases, mean the loss of a license.

A former member of the federal government task role on sex-role stereotyping in 1982, McDonald, told *Cinema Canada*, that pressure by women's organizations and other concerned citizen has gradually weaned the CRTC away from favoring private broadcasters.

"The CRTC had been dragging its heels on sex-role stereotyping for three years just like it did on the whole issue of Canadian content," says McDonald.

She says the decision to revise and strengthen guidelines already in effect on a self-regulatory basis by the Canadian Association of Broadcasters is bound to get results.

On just how successful the CRTC will be at measuring improvements to the "image of women," McDonald says that a quantitative measure will be "simple."

"If women appear 5 percent of the time instead of 50 percent of the time that is a fault," she says.

She says qualitative improvements, more prone to interpretation, will follow quantitative improvements.

McDonald who is also a member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Communications and Culture, expects that the new guidelines will be enforced in the the spring.

On Dec. 23, the CRTC announced that broadcasters will be ordered to follow strict guidelines, as a condition of their licenses, to eliminate excessive prime-time violence and sex-role stereotyping.

The aim of the CRTC policy is to improve the television image of women and increase their overall presence in broadcasting.

Petrie/Agostini win Emerillons

OTTAWA — The Emerillon, the emblematic statuette of the France-Canada Film and Video Award and an accompanying grant was presented for the first time, Jan. 15.

Screenwriter, director Daniel Petrie (Canada) and cinematographer Claude Agostini (France) became the first recipients of the award for their collaboration on *The Bay Boy*, a Franco-Canadian co-production.

Both filmmakers received a \$10,000 grant each and The Emerillon, named after one of Jacques Cartier's ships sculpted by Canadian Charles Daudelin.

The award, a symbol of cinematographic and audio-visual relations between both countries is presented every two years based on a decision by a mixed jury.

Louise Marleau (Canada), Marcia Couëlle (Canada) and Daniel Vigne (France) were the 1987 jurors.

Officiating at the ceremony was Flora MacDonald, minister of Communications and Jean Sirois, chairman of Telefilm Canada. François Léotard, French minister of Cultural Affairs was among the guests.

Special distinction was given by the jury to *Adolescente sucre d'amour* by Jocelyne Saab and *Lune de miel* by Patrick Jamain.

The next Franco-Canada Award will be held in Paris in 1989.



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"I would go to his room. During the day, when he was away from the house. Not to do anything, but just stand there, trying to pick up clues as to what the man was all about. I'd study the folds of his rumpled bed-sheets, the depression his head had made in the pillow. I'd check out his belongings, his taste in art — postcards, paperbacks, Gitane cigarettes, back issues of FUSE magazine — just the little things anybody would collect in the ten years or so since leaving high school."

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World tour for Chbib and independents

MONTREAL – Canadian Independent Film is alive and well despite inadequate assistance from distributors, funding agencies and broadcasters. This is the message Bachar Chbib, a director with eight films to his credit, hopes to bring to film audiences, the press and film industry insiders throughout the United States.

The 27-year-old filmmaker has organized and financed a three-part world tour to the U.S., Europe, and the Far East with 10 Canadian Independent Films.

Chbib and company will present seven films in 11 cities throughout the U.S. starting in New York City on Feb. 23 and winding up in Los Angeles on May 15.

The films include: **Low Visibility** by Patricia Gruben, **Crime Wave** by John Paizs, **Scissere** by Peter Mettler, **Next of Kin** by Atom Egoyan, **Mother's Meat: Freud's Flesh** by Dimitrios Estdelacropolis, **C'est comme une peine d'amour** by Suzanna Guy and **Memoirs** by Bachar Chbib.

Smaller art-house venues in the U.S. have been extremely enthusiastic, says Chbib, and several Canadian consulates will assist in providing advertising and a reception for the Canadian filmmakers. At least one filmmaker will be on hand in every city to introduce the films and respond to the accompanying literature outlining the plight of low-budget Canadian independent film production.

"Someone has to do it," says Chbib. "If no one does we will continue to rot here. It is a matter of survival."

Chbib hopes that a sympathetic response in the U.S. media will grab the attention of distributors in Canada and the U.S. With adverse press about the current lack of funding, he says, Canadian government organizations in a position to assist low budget independents, such as Telefilm Canada and CBC, may be moved to action.

Specifically, Chbib, wants accessible funding from Telefilm. He says current allocations of production funding is rarely enough and represents a fraction of the money spent on advertising.

"Either allocate funds for independent filmmakers or don't get involved at all," says Chbib.

To overcome the problem of programming independent films, Chbib says the CBC should open a two-hour slot in prime time for low-budget Canadian independent films with no restrictions or censorship.

"This will give us an opportunity to make some money from our productions," says the filmmaker.

Distribution is another problem.

"There is no distribution in Canada or the U.S. for this sort of film. A few big international distributors will sign these things but they never push

them because it is not profitable. Instead, if someone asks for a film, they have it on their shelf."

The overall cost of the world-wide tour will approach the \$30,000 mark with some money being recouped from film rentals. Press kits and mailings, including preview prints for the critics will incur

the greatest costs, says Chbib, who refuses to seek assistance from Telefilm.

"I don't want to go to Telefilm because it is they who we are fighting for lack of support for independent cinema. Why should Telefilm get its name on a package, on an international scale, that represents the blood and sweat of independent filmmakers."

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Minimal gains from provincial distribution deal

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could only result in "minimal gains" for them.

The trade-off, for Houle, is the possibility that having accepted the theatrical distribution agreement, the Quebecois distributors might profit handsomely by a favourable agreement concerning video distribution.

While the Majors dominate 96.5 percent of the North American theatrical box-office, they only distributed 38.5 percent of available titles in the video market in 1985, according to Houle's figures. If similar definitions can be applied to the video agreement as were used for the Oct. 22 agreement, Quebec's distributors might be able to eliminate some strong video distributors which are not members of the MPEAA: Vestron Video, Media Home Entertainment, Embassy Home Entertainment and perhaps Thorn-EMI, Prism Entertainment and others.

According to Houle video revenues now constitute 55 percent of total distribution revenues as opposed to 45 percent for theatrical. He notes that a video agreement is currently being negotiated.

In a final chapter entitled "Prospective," Houle states that the Quebec agreement leaves the federal government high and dry. "The agreement holds no useful or workable idea upon which the federal government could build a distribution policy." Nevertheless, the federal government is reported to be preparing just such a policy at the present time.

Copies of the study by Houle are available through Telefilm Canada offices. All quotes in the above article are freely made by *Cinema Canada* from the original French version.

In an interesting aside, the agreement, though signed on Oct. 22, was to include all active members of the MPEAA on Jan. 1, 1987. Three phone calls to the New York office of the association and one call to the Canadian Motion Picture Distributors Associations (CMPDA), the Canadian lobby for the Majors, failed to produce a list of members. *Cinema Canada* was told that no one in either New York or Toronto was privy to the current list of members nor authorized to reveal it to the press.

Petra signs new co-production

VANCOUVER - Charles Wilkinson and Cal Shumiatcher (Petra Films) have signed an agreement with West Berlin's Panorama Films to co-produce their \$2.3 million feature *Visa*.

Wilkinson was in West Berlin last September pitching the project, and settled with Panorama, which has experience in both indigenous production and co-production. The feature will be an official Canadian/German co-production, with two-thirds Canadian backing and one-third German. The deal is structured so that a Canadian distributor (as yet unnamed) will have worldwide rights, though it is expected that a German distributor will sub-distribute to the Western European market.

In addition to signing a co-producer, Wilkinson and Shumiatcher have brought Au-

stralian Richard Davis (who now resides in Vancouver) on board as associate producer. Davis produced the TV series *Quest*, and was executive in charge of production on *The Pirate Movie* and the U.S./Australian feature *Phar Lap*.

Telefilm has been involved in the development of the project through Business Affairs and the co-production office, and is maintaining ongoing interest.

Howe stirs up Storm abroad

VANCOUVER - Tom Howe's THA Media Distributors (Thomas Howe Associates Ltd. Media Distributors) has picked up the world-wide rights to David Winning's award-winning feature *Storm*, and has licensed The Cannon Group to handle the international distribution. The first cut of the film was shown to very good re-

sponse at festivals in 1985, though Winning's Groundstar Pictures has since shot additional scenes for the 1987 release.

Howe also has an option with Groundstar on Winning's next action/thriller called *Flash Frame*, which is part of a five picture package that Home is taking to the U.S. markets, starting with the National Association Television Production Executives (NATPE) and fishing with the American Film Market at the end of February, to initiate some pre-sales. Two other features in the package are Doug Nicolle's *First Season* and Marv Newland's animated feature *Tunes Times Nine*. Two other western-based projects are still to be decided on.

Western lobby

WINNIPEG - Stephen Onda (Framework Productions) is

the ringleader of a new coalition of Western independent filmmakers groups which intend to lobby the CBC, the NFB and Telefilm for more support of local drama production.

As a first step, the British Columbia Film Industry Association, the Alberta Motion Picture Industries Association, the Saskatchewan Motion Picture Industry Association and the Manitoba Association for Picture and Sound sent representatives to the CBC regional producer's meeting which was held at the end of January in Winnipeg, the present their views and suggestions for the efficient and mutually beneficial use of western independent producers. Chris Bruyere represented the BCFIA, and Vancouver's Wayne Sterloff attended the meeting. The alliance (Western Provincial Motion Picture Industry Association) was formed on November 15 in Saskatoon.

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No change for pay

TORONTO — Despite government promises of improved access to the \$62 million broadcast fund, little has changed for the pay-TV industry, the president of the First Choice movie channel says.

Fred Klinkhammer, First Choice Canadian Communications Corporation president, said the changes announced December 9 by federal communications minister Flora MacDonald are a disappointment.

In November last year MacDonald said that access to Telefilm Canada's Broadcast Program Development Fund would be opened up.

Shortly afterwards Klinkhammer applauded the move, but when he reviewed the December announcement he said no improvements were actually made for the pay-TV industry.

"It is an exact maintenance of the original status quo — no change at all," he said.

MacDonald, in the December announcement, said the changes "are designed to strengthen program production and provide Canadian viewers with a wider choice of high-quality Canadian programs."

The announcement that pay-TV could get Telefilm money if it had an agreement with a producer and an arrangement that the program would air on an over-the-air channel is not new, Klinkhammer said.

"We have always been able to have access if the producer also had an agreement with a commercial broadcaster."

But a department of communications spokesman said that the original announcement indicated improved access was dependent on certain conditions.

Shirley Serafini said that the government wanted to improve the situation for pay-TV, but not provide access without an agreement with an over-the-air broadcaster or a basic cable broadcaster.

Klinkhammer said independent Canadian producers have about \$2.7 million in cash offers for completed scripts from First Choice for which about \$5.4 million in private investment could be obtained. But without the improved access to Telefilm, they won't have the money to complete projects, he explained.

"The money is no good to the producer unless he can trigger Telefilm (money),"

Klinkhammer told *Cinema Canada*.

"I would like to see the independent production community point out to the government that they really got screwed in this decision."

Klinkhammer said the pay-TV industry has traditionally had trouble reaching exhibition agreements with over-the-air broadcasters like CBC, CTV and the Global television network. He said recent license renewal hearings for the networks confirmed the problem.

"We have got the big three networks on the record as saying we're not playing."

Klinkhammer said the minister's initial announcement of greater access indicated an attempt to remedy a serious problem. Since then something changed, he added.

"I just find it bizarre that there was a time when we didn't have any money and we were struggling to survive and

now we have got the money and are desperately trying to make the contribution and we are being frustrated."

Serafini said nothing changed between the time of the two announcements. She said that under the criteria of the broadcast fund, money is to be provided to improve Canadian programming for the largest audience possible. She explained that pay-TV serves only a small portion of all Canadian viewers.

Both Superchannel and SuperEcran pay-TV officials support the policy, she said.

Those licensed by the CRTC as basic cable broadcasters will gain most under the announced changes, she said. The new provisions are to take effect April 1, 1987.

The new provisions mean programs produced for satellite-to-cable broadcast services (such as pay-TV, Much Music,

the Sports Network and some others) can get access if carried on basic cable service (the channels provided by a cable company for which a converter isn't needed).

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) has delayed its hearing into applications for license approval from 23 broadcast groups. Some want to provide new specialty services such as youth, religious and ethnic programming, while some existing specialty services want to go on basic cable and therefore not be an extra expense for subscribers.

The hearings were set for Feb. 10, 1987, but in light of the Telefilm changes the CRTC has asked for new or revised applications. The new deadline for applications has been moved to March 12, 1987. The hearings will probably follow several months later.

Time Bomb looks for slot

MONTREAL — *Time Bomb*, a docu-cabaret about youth unemployment in the streets of Montreal, is a one-hour made-for-television video looking for a home.

Directed by Mort Ransen (*Bayo*) the film is a blend of documentary footage, skits and a 12-piece musical score depicting the fringe lifestyle of five unemployed young people living together in a low rent warehouse space.

It is this unusual mix, says co-producer Lindalee Tracey, that presents a dilemma for CBC programmers.

"They say they love it because it is so different but they don't know how to slot it."

PBS has also expressed interest, says Tracey, and Telefilm has promised assistance

once a broadcaster has been secured by Tracey and co-producer Peter Bierman who have incorporated the film under Montreal Foundation of the Performing Arts.

With National Film Board assistance and a combined total of \$60,000 from the secretaries of state at the federal and provincial level, the project was shot during the sum-

mer of 1985 over a five-week period in 34 different locations. About 83 cast and crew worked on a deferred salary basis amounting to an estimated \$160,000.

Ransen and Bierman wrote the script after 124 interviews with Montreal's unemployed youth and both Edward Knoll and David Rimmer penned the musical score.

Lapidus to Spectra consult

TORONTO — Spectrafilm has hired a high profile American consultant to help the company with plans to expand its distribution of films this year.

Larry Lapidus, a partner in Creative Consultants, Ltd., has been hired as a special consultant to help Spectrafilm with a plan to distribute 12 films in 1987.

Previously Lapidus worked as vice-chairman and president of RKO Century Warner Theatres. He has also held executive jobs with Stanley Warner, General Cinema, Loew's and Mann Theatres.

Lapidus will be working with Spectrafilm's vice-president of distribution Nick Perrott, a press release states.

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OAC takes on censorship

TORONTO – The Ontario Arts Council (OAC) has adopted a broad policy opposing censorship that, in part, takes aim at movie censorship by the province's film review board.

A statement from the OAC also says that the provincial practice of having movies and videos reviewed sets filmmakers apart from all other artists in the province.

Robert Sirman, director of operations at the arts council, said the policy was adopted last summer by the 12 members of the council's board.

The policy was approved for several reasons, Sirman said. The OAC, the government agency that funds many of the province's artists and art groups, wants to raise public consciousness about the issue, he said.

As well, the council wants to identify itself with the arts community as being opposed to prior restraint (censorship performed before public release or distribution) and as opposed to censorship in general, he said.

Sirman said the council hopes it will have some influence on the Ontario government in terms of changing censorship policy or legislation.

Although the policy adopted is broad and could be aimed at any number of groups or agencies which could potentially censor art in various ways, Sirman said the arts council is most opposed to prior restraint of artistic practice.

"Our first priority is that artistic practice should not be an area of prior restraint. As it is not at the moment with painting and theatre and publications, etc., so to it should not be with the artistic practice of filmmakers and video artists."

He said the arts council would support classification instead of censorship.

Sirman was asked if the approval of the policy pitted one part of government against another part of the same government.

He said just as other segments of the government take positions that are "inconsistent" with the arts council, the OAC feels it must support or promote the artistic community. He said the arts council's mandate is different from the mandates of other agencies of the government.

"We have had no negative feedback from the position that we have taken on this subject from any part of the government."

Former OAC executive director Walter Pitman met with Ontario Film Review Board chairman Anne Jones at the

end of December, 1986 to discuss the issue. Sirman, who also attended, termed it a courtesy meeting.

He said during the meeting it became clear that Jones was most interested in commercial sector filmmaking and wasn't aware of the arts community's concerns about the censor

board which had gradually become more involved in censorship of artistic films and videos.

The OAC statement reads: "The Ontario Arts Council is opposed to censorship. Censorship is the imposition of prior restraint whereby a government or government

agency reviews artistic creation for the purpose of altering content which it deems to be objectionable, or prohibiting its distribution to the public.

Ontario's current practice of reviewing films and video materials distinguishes artists who work in these media from all others. The Ontario Arts Council

opposes this practice, which discriminates against certain artistic constituencies, and also supports the right of all artists to create and exhibit work."

Sirman said the arts council's interest in censorship issues has been continuous since 1980.

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Demers tells another tale SDA may rep Schulz in Montreal

MONTREAL — A business trip to Cairo turned into an unexpected holiday for Quebec producer Rock Demers and director André Melançon.

Both filmmakers were the invited guests of the Cairo International Film Festival, in mid-December, where Demers presented the first two award-winning films in his *Tales For All* series, *The Dog Who Stopped the War* directed by Melançon and *The Peanut Butter Solution* directed by Michael Rubbo.

The festival was eventful in as much as nothing worked and nothing connected, says Demers, who failed to meet with buyers from Tunisia, Algeria and other Arab countries.

"It was not the right place to find what I was looking for."

Demers was also thwarted in his intentions to "see the reactions of foreign audiences."

His problems started when the secretariat of the festival was unable to say which of the 12 festival theatres, in and about the ancient city (pop: 8 million plus), were showing his films. There was no festival transportation between theatres and very rarely did the screenings begin on time.

In fact, says Demers, one screening of *The Dog Who Stopped the War* started a half hour earlier than scheduled. Undaunted and determined to get an audience reaction, Demers arrived at the theatre, the next day, with time to spare only to sit through a half hour delay.

He observed, to his dismay, that there were more cats "using" the empty theatre seats than there were people, and that once the screening started the selling of tea from deli-

cately balanced steaming tea pots, and the loud greeting of friends and late comers, did not stop.

Screen projection? Demers describes it this way: "I have been in this business for 30 years and I have never seen anything so bad."

The audience was responsive in a positive way, says Demers, but consisted entirely of a small group of men ages 25 to 60 years, no women and no children.

It was while sitting in the back of a rank-smelling taxi cab, caught between the theatre and his hotel in the dust and clamour of the thickly congested City of the Dead, when Demers decided he would simply try to enjoy himself.

"The Museum of Cairo is wonderful," Demers told *Cinema Canada*.

Quiet too.

MONTREAL — Negotiations continue between SDA Productions Ltd. in Montreal and Schulz Productions in Toronto about a possible business affiliation.

At press time, a spokesperson for Schulz Productions, told *Cinema Canada*, that the Toronto-based production house is seeking an agent in Montreal.

"There are a lot of fine advertising agencies in Montreal and a substantial demand for our people," said the highly placed spokesperson who did not wish to be identified while negotiations were underway.

Asked whether opening an office was a strong alternative to using SDA production facilities and staff, the spokesperson replied, "It is not a big priority." He explained that the centre of commercial production activity in Canada is firmly situated in Toronto.

Chantal Montgomery of SDA told *Cinema Canada*, that in fact an agreement "to exchange services" with Schulz could be signed before the end of January once the fine details have been approved.

The 36-year-old Montreal-based production house recently withdrew a public offering of company shares valued at \$4.8 million.

The offer was made in September 1986 and withdrawn in December when Le Groupe COGECO bought 27 percent of SDA for \$1.25 million. Le Groupe COGECO is invested in TV, radio and cable and has recently bought control of CFGL-FM in Laval, Quebec.

Montgomery explained that just over half of the 1,280,000 SDA shares at \$3.75 had been reserved when the public offering was withdrawn in favor

of Le Groupe COGECO one of several such offers.

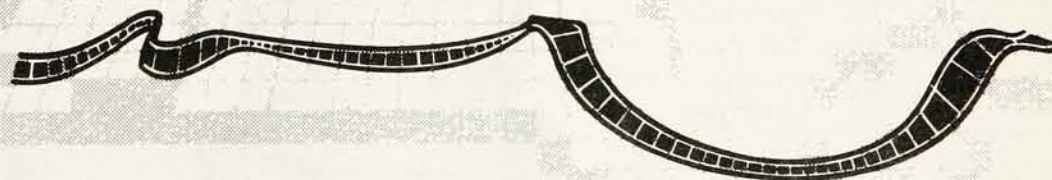
"We decided that we did not need the pressure of answering to our investors and that \$4.8 million was more than we needed to move into larger premises," explains Montgomery.

She says the company, currently in three locations in Montreal could relocate under one roof by the summer.

With a substantial involvement in television as well as feature film and TV commercial production, gross revenues for SDA in the first six months of 1986 were \$5.1 million.

However, Montgomery says general economic trends and a concentration of commercial production activity in Toronto has resulted in a sharp decline in revenues from commercials.

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MONTREAL — *Bach and Broccoli*, the third film in a series of family films known as *Tales For All* produced by Rock Demers of Les Productions La Fête has topped the \$1 million box office mark after 10 weeks.

The film is directed by André Melançon who also directed *The Dog Who Stopped the War* in the same series.

Bach and Broccoli (in French, *Bach et Bottine*) is slated for a English-language release on March 6 in Montreal and Toronto, followed by openings across Canada.

Demers told *Cinema Canada* recently that the first five films in the *Tales For All* series, including *The Peanut Butter Solution*, will be shown at the Cannes Film Festival in May in both French and English.



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Labour woes end on Quebec sets

MONTREAL — Seven years of contract negotiations, often embittered, were concluded recently by a round of handshakes between Quebec producers and representatives of a 700-member technicians union.

A two-year collective agreement was signed, Jan. 14, by Rock Demers, president of the Association des producteurs de films et de vidéo du Québec (APFVQ) and Robert Guertin, acting president of the Syn-

dicat des techniciennes et des techniciens du cinéma du Québec (STCQ).

The STCQ decision to sign the agreement is the result of a union-wide referendum in early December in which 400

members voted 75 percent in favor of accepting what the producers were calling their "final offer."

Highlights of this offer include a three-percent pension fund, wage compensation for night work, a joint accident insurance program and a joint standing committee to deter-

mine special rates for low-budget films. The high and low (minimum) hourly rates on the pay scale are \$9.75 for a production assistant and \$30.00 for a director of photography. The wage scale is based on 1985 figures projected over three years.

"Everybody is very happy about this signing, Guertin told *Cinema Canada*, "it has been a long time coming." The STCQ had been without a collective agreement since 1979.

Guertin says although there may be a residue of dissatisfaction among members about the comparatively low wage rates at the low end of the scale, it was in the best interest of the union to call a referendum and subsequently take the producers' offer.

"There may be those among us who think we might have pursued a better deal but it is our hope," says Guertin, "that people in those lower paying positions won't be there too long if they are any good."

"In the light of the referendum results," explains Guertin, "it is clear that we had to draw the line so as not to lose what we had already gained."

The STCQ/APFVQ working relationship reached an all-time low in early December when a general assembly of the producers' organization voted to annul the collective agreement following an unexpected demand by the STCQ to renegotiate all 56 wage positions in the collective agreement. Prior to this annulment and subsequent referendum, and despite stalled negotiation talks and work stoppages on feature film sets, only 17 wage positions at the lower end of the scale were left unsigned.

Jennifer Jonas, the STCQ secretary, describes as "bewildering" the period during which there was no collective agreement. (On Jan. 5, given the results of the STCQ referendum, the producers voted to lift the annulment).

Jonas was hired as location manager for Filmline International's *Ford: The Man and Machine* the first TV film to start shooting during the annulment period.

"It was like going back 15 years with no contract, no union recognition, no distinction made between union members and beginners. For those of us who have been around for awhile, it was a complete shock," says Jonas.

Jonas says the signing of the collective agreement represents a new beginning in the STCQ/APFVQ relations.

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Will Telefilm Journey with Watkins to Berlin?

MONTREAL – WILL Telefilm Canada find it in the goodness of its corporate heart to provide distribution funding for Peter Watkin's 14-hour peace epic entitled **The Journey**?

As of the second week in January the answer is "no" says Jan Rofekamp of Les Films Transit Inc. who will premier the film, over a three-day period, at the Berlin International Film Festival, Feb. 20 to March 3, with or without Telefilm assistance

Rofekamp, who holds world distribution rights to **The Journey**, formerly **The Nuclear War Story**, says the extraordinary degree of Canadian participation in the film shot in 15 different countries on a slim production budget of close to \$2.3 million deserves some recognition in the form of support by Telefilm Canada, the government funding agency.

He admits, however, that there are several major obstacles in the way of a Telefilm endorsement unless Telefilm is willing to be flexible.

"I know the technical rules as well as Pearson (Telefilm president Peter Pearson) does," says Rofekamp, "and even if we can't bend those rules the film will be in my stand in Berlin and will be the main event representing a lot of Canadians."

Among 20 to 30 Canadian filmmakers who had a hand in the film on a voluntary basis is Peter Wintonick who acted as editor and Canadian co-ordinating producer.

Wintonick estimates that the Canadian contribution including all of the post production work with National Film Board assistance, deferred salaries and monies raised privately amount to in excess of \$900,000 to date.

In effect, he says, the Canadians salvaged the film when the Swedes found the cost of post production prohibitive. Thus, Wintonick says, the film is a sort of Canadian co-production even though monies have been raised around the

world and the film cannot be classified in a strict legal sense as a Canadian film.

Both Rofekamp and Wintonick have been told by Telefilm that a Canadian broadcaster and adherence to Canadian content regulations is necessary before Telefilm assistance can be considered.

Says Wintonick: "Because of the international nature of this film we have not been able to go through this process. Some people look inwards and others look out."

The 14-hour film, directed and produced by British filmmaker Peter Watkins and co-produced by the Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society has been in the works since 1982. The film has been shot in 10 languages and can be broken down into 45 to 50-minute units or thematic modules for community group or school-room use. Each unit in a thematic continuity which includes the use of live action footage, graphics, computerization, animation, documentary footage, raises a peace related issue. These issues range from the impact of the arms race on human psychology to Third World development versus the arms race.

Pilon on board at Telefilm Canada

TORONTO – Telefilm Canada has a new executive in charge of its financial coffers and legal affairs.

Lawrence Pilon joined Telefilm Canada, the federal government's movie and television development agency, Jan. 12, 1987. Previously, Pilon worked as vice-president and general counsel for movie exhibition chain Famous Players Limited in Toronto. He worked at Famous Players for more than 20 years.

Pilon, who is based in Telefilm's Toronto offices, was

named executive – financial control and legal services.

The new Telefilm executive will have overall financial authority within the agency for production and distribution loans.

As well, a Telefilm spokesman said Pilon will be responsible for agency investments made within the framework of the 13 different funds administered. He will handle Telefilm's investment planning.

Pilon is also in charge of all contract management for Telefilm.

The making of Amerika on CBC-Radio

TORONTO – CBC-Radio will examine the controversial ABC-TV mini-series **Amerika** in a two-part program in February.

CBC-Radio's **Ideas** program will take an in-depth look at the 14.5 hour mini-series that is scheduled to air on the CTV network later in February.

Amerika takes place in 1994 after a Soviet takeover of the United States. The mini-series details the lives of several Americans after the country is over-run in an unopposed coup.

Much of the filming of the

television series was done in Toronto where it raised opposition from some filmmakers and members of the public.

The show has been criticized on the grounds that it stereotypes several groups including the Soviets, women and some ethnic groups. Critics have also labelled it anti-Soviet propaganda.

A spokesman for **Amerika** has called it "entertainment," adding it is a work of fiction. Some view the program as a look at the fundamental values of American society.

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Stephenson appointed director of Festival of Festival

TORONTO – Festival of Festivals officials have appointed a new director to head up their annual celebration of film.

Helga Stephenson was appointed director Dec. 19, 1986 after a six-member selection committee reviewed about 80 applications and a short list of four.

Stephenson, who had been acting director of the festival following the departure of Leonard Schein last year, said she has a year by year arrangement with the festival.

In some ways last year was a difficult time, she said, adding that she was not surprised a wide-ranging search was made.

"It was very important that the board conduct a very open and complete search..." Stephenson said her message to the festival committee was that she was interested in the director's job, but if a better person could be found then that person should be hired. And if another person was hired, Stephenson said she explained that she wouldn't quit.

Stephenson has no plans to change the basic format of the festival which she says has

proven very successful.

In a wide-ranging interview with *Cinema Canada* Stephenson said the Gala events, Contemporary World and Perspective Canada programs will remain while a search goes on for larger theatres.

"Obviously – with the crowds last year – we have room to grow," she said.

Compounding the problem of long line-ups and overcrowding at some events last year is the fact that Famous Players' University and Towne theatres, both of which were used in last year's festival, have been closed. With seating of 1,344 the University was Canada's largest cinema.

The festival's new director said she wants the Toronto festival to grow intelligently, adding that there is no point in growth for growth's sake. She said that she wants the festival to remain focussed in the Yorkville area and not become spread out.

Stephenson explained that overcrowding, as experienced at last year's festival, is very difficult to anticipate.

Stephenson was asked about reports made by Montreal fes-

tival director Serge Losique that the rival Toronto festival has been releasing inflated attendance figures.

She denied the allegations and added the Festival of Festivals will continue to publish its attendance figures and costs.

Following last year's attendance figure uproar Stephenson said she expects the press to ask about the issue in future.

"I'm sure there will be closer scrutiny this year and that's fine."

Stephenson said Montreal festival director Losique doesn't seem to think there is room for both the Toronto and Montreal festivals. Stephenson said there is room for both.

There will be no giant 1987 retrospective as was done on Latin American cinema last year, Stephenson said. Retrospectives of that size are just not manageable every year, she explained.

The Latin American retrospective, called Winds of Change, included 96 films from a dozen countries. It was billed as the largest retrospective of new Latin American cinema ever mounted.

In fact Stephenson, who was

in Cuba in December 1986, received a personal thank you from Cuban leader Fidel Castro for helping create the Latin American retrospective. Stephenson put Winds of Change together with Festivals of Festivals programmer Piers Handling. The pair screened more than 500 films in the process.

Stephenson said Castro was definitely aware that the Latin American retrospective was well received and attracted good crowds in Toronto.

Castro and the Cuban minister of culture expressed thanks for having made the project a success and added it was a very important moment for Latin American cinema, she explained.

"They were completely astounded. They hadn't expected the success."

In order to put the retrospective together the Cubans had allowed their extensive government film archives to be used, she said.

Stephenson said Castro is a film buff interested in all kinds of movies.

On the topic of her new appointment, Stephenson said

she hadn't expected to become director of the festival so quickly. Showing a handful of congratulatory telegrams, including one from Schein who is now employed as a programmer at the Montreal festival, Stephenson said she is grateful for the support she and the festival have received.

Stephenson has had a gradual, but growing involvement with the Festival of Festivals. Her previous festival jobs include volunteer/fundraiser, director of communications, programmer and deputy-director.

Lupo wins at Oregon festival

VANCOUVER – **Lupo the Butcher**, a three-minute colour cartoon, directed and animated by Danny Antonucci, at International Rocketship Ltd., Vancouver, has won a prize at the 14th Annual Northwest Film and Video Festival in Portland, Oregon. This year Philip Borsos, director of **The Grey Fox** was a member of the festival jury.

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LEGAL EYE

by Michael Bergman

The last months of 1986 saw a flurry of prospectuses, information circulars and offering memoranda being filed with the country's several securities commissions. Many commentators have noted that 1986's last minute dash to take advantage of feature film financing through tax shelters has been unusually heavy compared to the first five years of the '80s when film tax shelters were not in vogue. An interesting element of this recent spate of securities commission submissions has been the number of producers using the limited partnership approach.

Limited partnerships have been used by Canadian producers since the early '80s following the successful application of the limited partnership approach by several independent film producers in the United States. The current vogue of limited partnership owes much to the need to integrate three components for successful tax shelter film financing: equity investment in the film negative itself, investor participation beyond laying out the money and producer flexibility. To understand how limited partnership fulfills these three needs requires an understanding of the legal notion of partnership in general.

Partnership is a legal concept regulated by statute. Partnership is a contract whereby the partners contribute money, property or services as capital to the partnership in pursuit of a common

objective from which each partner will participate in the profits and support the losses. The partners may create between themselves an imbalance between them: one partner may contribute less, one partner may be entitled to a greater share of the profits; one partner may be entitled to support a smaller portion of the losses than the other; one partner may be entitled to manage the partnership against the other's wishes. Nevertheless and regardless of the arrangements between the partners themselves, to the outside world all partners are equal and consequently equally responsible both for the management and the losses. Consequently each partner can be made to pay a debt in equal portions by a creditor although one partner may be entitled to reimbursement from the others where between them that partner has to support less of the losses. There is no limited liability like that applicable to shareholders of corporations. Partners are liable to third parties to an unlimited extent. Their personal property can be subject to seizure and execution to satisfy court judgments rendered against the partnership although usually the partnership property will be subject to seizure first and only if this proves insufficient would the personal property of a partner be affected.

Partnerships are dissolved when one of the partners withdraws, whether voluntarily or by death. On dissolution the property of the partnership is liquidated and distributed amongst the partners or their heirs. Where no agreement can be made on the method of distribution, application can be made to court for the appointment of a liquidator or a receiver. Given the possibility of differences and disputes over the liquidation of a partnership most partnership agreements contain provisions for the appointment of an arbitrator to settle this problem.

All partnerships must be registered, failing which the partners are liable to sanctions, ranging from fines to being precluded to sue for partnership claims in court. Once the partnership is registered all of the named partners can be sued for the partnership debts whether or not they are truly partners. For this reason it is important for the dissolution of a partnership to also be registered even if some of the partners subsequently re-form the partnership.

From this brief explanation many readers may conclude

that incorporated companies are preferable entities and quite often they would be right. But partnerships can be a useful commercial vehicle for a number of reasons. Partners own the property of the partnership directly. They have a direct title and equity interest in all of the property of the partnership unlike shareholders who do not own the property of the corporation. Partnership is easy to dissolve and to re-form, the will of one of the partners to withdraw is sufficient. There are no minority or majority rights to deal with, no liquidation or winding up of corporations according to complicated rules to contend with. There is no complicated hierarchy of officers, directors, chairpersons and the like as is the case in corporations. There are no incorporation fees and no legal costs for the annual fulfillment of legal requirements to maintain the corporation and file reports on its status.

Limited partnerships are a special form of partnership. In limited partnerships the partners are divided between general partners and special partners. General partners have all the attributes of partners in regular partnerships as described above, special partners have a much more limited role. Unlike general partners they are liable for the partnership's debts only up to the amount of their capital contribution to the partnership. They have no role in the management of the partnership and they can withdraw from the partnership without causing the dissolution of the entire partnership. These attributes have the effect of offering a producer a certain degree of flexibility while enabling him to be free from being overly encumbered by the investor. In a limited partnership the special partner owns a portion of the partnership property up to the value of the special partner's contribution to the partnership. In film-limited partnerships the only property of the partnership is the negative itself. The effect is similar to the special partner having purchased a unit in a film under the more traditional film tax shelter financing method. Since the special partner has an ownership interest in the negative itself he is entitled to the benefits of the feature film tax shelter. As a special partner has no say in the management of the partnership, consequently the producer, who is usually the general partner, has complete freedom of action in the production of the film.

Most feature film-limited partnerships give special partners the option of withdrawing from the partnership by ex-

changing their status as a special partner for shares in the producing corporation which is the general partner. The value of these shares would be fixed at the time that the option is exercised. This scheme acts as an incentive for investors to take advantage of the limited partnership by enabling them to exchange their investment for shares. There are many pitfalls with these seemingly enticing incentives, from tax consequences on the recapture of depreciation taken on the original investment, the circumstances and means of determining the shares obtained in the general partner, to determining whether or not such an exchange is really worthwhile.

One of the problems of the current use of limited partnerships in Canadian film financing is that they still tend to be designed to finance one or two projects at a time and not as a means of attracting direct investments into ongoing feature film corporations. Taken as a whole the use of limited partnerships in Canadian feature film financing at least offers the investor a new angle on the traditional purchase of units in a feature film for tax shelter purposes. Whether the use of limited partnerships will spark a true resurgence in the use of tax shelters for feature film financing ultimately de-

pends on the abilities of the producer, both as filmmaker and business man, and the extent to which he is attentive to the investor's needs and requirements.

Michael N. Bergman •

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Danger Bay

TORONTO — The **Danger Bay** television series has been renewed by both the Disney Channel in the United States and the CBC, Sunrise Films Limited has announced.

Shooting on 22 new episodes is scheduled to begin in May, 1987. It will be the fourth season for the action-adventure series that is shot on location in British Columbia.

CBC drama head John Kennedy and Disney Channel programming vice-president Bruce Rider lauded the program and both said it has performed well on their networks.

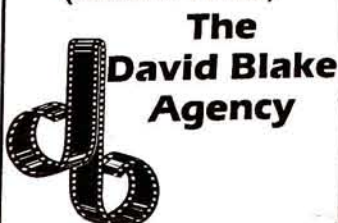
Danger Bay, which features the adventures of a marine veterinarian and his family, is produced by a subsidiary of Sunrise Films Limited of Toronto.

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ON (EXPERIMENTAL) FILM

by B. Sternberg

There have been a number of films completed recently and quite a few more that are nearing completion. From the West, Kirk Tougas presents **Return to Departure: The Biography of a Painting or Watching Pigment Dry and Other Realisms**, 83 min., 16mm, colour (see *Cinema Canada* #134). The film is competing for a Genie this year in the feature-length documentary category; Chris Gallagher, who teaches film at the University of Regina, has just finished **Undivided Attention**, 110 min., 16mm, colour. Chris describes the film as "an oblique narrative... using a great variety of incidents, moments and passages arranged in sequences, some created for the camera and others real events... a visual/conceptual workout that can be seen more than once." **Undivided Attention** will premiere in Toronto, February 5 at Innis College Film Society;

Al Razutis, presently teaching at Simon Fraser University, made a film, **Splice**, 25 min., colour, 16mm, using footage taken during National Film Week (the event that opened the Pacific CineCentre in Vancouver last spring) in particular, footage of the six filmmaker panelists who spoke on "Avant-Garde Film Practice: 6 Views." As Razutis explains it, he treats the footage of each filmmaker in a style reminiscent of their own work. In progress is an experimental film, **Ley Lines** by Patricia Gruben.

Montreal filmmaker Raphael Bendahan has recently returned from six months in Labrador (he was teaching video production within the Inuit community) — where he shot a lot of footage that will eventually find its way into a film — and has a new film in distribution, **When the Light Grey Man Carries Your Luggage**, 10 min., b&w, 16mm. The film

interprets the poem of the same title by Canadian poet Joe Rosenblatt.

In Ontario there is Gary McLaren's **Just Talk** 18 min. colour, 16mm. "The Church is a centre of delusive guilt, emanating rays of powerful influence over a strange couple's lives. Relationships collide at oblique angles to split thoughts into articulated non-communication. Telephone lines cross, spanning centuries, while people just talk and look on," says McLaren. Also, Sharon Cook has released a 35 min. Super 8 film, **Encyclopedia of Natural Defects**, which she describes as "a quasi-musical... in which famous paintings are re-enacted while most of the dialogue is in pig-latin." Blaine Allen's newest film entitled **3:48** is, according to Blaine, "a film about living and dying in Ontario." It uses mainly small-town television news footage and promotional film in a construct that "writes history like a dream." The film is 25 min., b&w and colour, 16mm.

And there are a lot of films in the works. Phil Hoffman is putting the finishing touches on

Passing Through, 40 min., b&w and colour, 16mm. This film continues Phil's interest in the diary film — this time a 'family' diary as opposed to the more usual first-person singular. "Characters are constructed through a pix/sound design which offers ambiguous characterization; for example, voice and picture are transferable amongst family members so that personalization of the problems becomes defocused." Shot in both Czechoslovakia and Canada, the film has a lot to do with migration and translation.

Midi Onodera is completing a film, **Displaced Views**, 112 min., colour, 16mm, that deals with being a Japanese-Canadian and the experience of the internment of Japanese-Canadians during World War II. The story is told by three generations of women in a family: the grandmother, *Issei*-1st generation; the mother, *Nissei*-2nd generation; and the filmmaker/narrator, *Sansei*-3rd generation. Bruce Elder, on sabbatical this year from Ryerson Polytechnical, continues work on this film cycle which includes **The Art of Worldly Wisdom, Illuminated Texts, Lamentations** and now **Consolations**. The film carries on the alternation of dramatic sequences and montage sequences of **Lamentations** and, I hear, is nearing the same length! Mike Hoolboom has

been hard at work on an experimental narrative, b&w, 16mm, feature-length, which has undergone massive changes but, if grants go well, may be nearing completion. And Peter Mettler has been hard at work getting the funding in place for a feature — the longest and trickiest part of the whole endeavor of feature filmmaking, it seems — which he hopes to shoot in 35mm, beginning in May called **The Top of his Head**. The film, Mettler says, "sets out to construct both a narrative and filmic form that emulate the interaction of intuition and intellect... I am continuing explorations from my previous work in determining the influences that shape one's vision, expression and perception... The narrative quite simply portrays a young man dealing with an everyday world that no longer conforms to his expectations and routines." And there are more even than I've mentioned here.

So work goes on — some continuing directions explored in previous experimental films, some at points of departure within their own work, some shifting towards the 'more accessible' genres of documentary or narrative from a desire to have their work seen by more people.

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E A S T E R N W A V E

by Chris Majka

The festive season has been a pleasant one here in the east. The lakes are frozen to a smooth black-ice and the skaters are out turning dizzying circles, their long scarves streaming out behind them. On New Year's Day the local detachment of the 'Polar Bears' were out in full force to throw themselves screaming into Halifax harbour (whether this was due to the cold or the polluted state of the waters I cannot attest).

On December 11 the National Film Board organized the Atlantic premiere of the new film by filmmaking duo Tina Viljoen and Gwynne Dyer called **Harder Than It Looks**. A tightly cut and scripted half-hour film, it examines the proposition that our whole world might be made safer if Canada and the Scandinavian countries created a neutral non-aligned block which would form a buffer zone between the superpowers. In the tradition of the interest in peace and disarmament issues which seems to characterize this area, a capacity audience was on hand at the large theatre in the International Education Centre where the screen-

ing took place. Afterwards a panel consisting of Rear Admiral Frederick Crickett, former diplomat Arthur Andrew, Professor Gillian Thomas, Ms. Viljoen and Mr. Dyer debated some of the ideas presented in the film with equally energetic input from the audience. The salient point was that non-alignment is only a feasible strategy if one can make it stick and convince *both* superpowers that one is neutral. Various speakers also argued that, in the end, Canada's alignment makes little difference since in a nuclear conflict Canada will be destroyed irrespective of how it is aligned. Hence our chief foreign policy goal ought to be to find ways of getting the superpowers to behave and talk to one another. Sobering thoughts.

The winter chill seems not to have slowed down the pace of film activity in the area. Robert Frank's **There Ain't No Candy Mountain** wrapped in Cape Breton in the middle of December. Apparently the French, Swiss, French Canadian, American and Maritimes crew was a slightly unstable one with problems in communication and trust but the

film seems to have passed through relatively unscathed. The last segment of the film will be shot in New York.

In Halifax, Bill MacGillivray seems to have been cutting a blue streak and has come up with a fine cut of **Life Classes** which only wrapped on October 30. Rumours are the film looks very good and a sneak preview screening of the cutting copy will take place in the next month. At the same time Picture Plant, the producer of **Life Classes**, continues pre-production research on a documentary of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design which is planned for later this year. It is the centennial of the founding of the College (the location, real and fictional, of many of the scenes in **Life Classes**) and MacGillivray would like to make a film to mark the occasion.

Salter Street Films is continuing post-production on **Codco**, the made-for-television six-part mini-series which wrapped on November 8 (see the On Location report in this issue). On the southern front (the *very* southernmost front - shooting is taking place in southern Argentina!) Paul Donovan's **Normanicus** has survived an urgent cash-flow crisis in the middle of production and has completed principal photography more or less on schedule at the end of 1986.

Les Krizan, president of Krizan Productions in Halifax, has spent the past several months back in his native Budapest studying the Hungarian film production situation with a Canada Council grant. Always a superb cinematographer, he is trying to absorb even more of the lyrical Hungarian style of shooting. He is currently 'on leave' from this project doing the second unit shooting for

Salter Street in Argentina, but he is due to go back to Budapest to help shoot a feature there. Despite this globe-trotting he is nevertheless proceeding with plans for a feature he would like to shoot in Nova Scotia on - think of a better location if you can - Sable Island.

In New Brunswick at the Filmmakers Co-op in Fredericton work is almost complete on a dramatic film, **Spectre of Rexton**. An answer print is expected within the month. A new addition to the Co-op, Gail Schnitter, is working on a cell animation of a poem called **My Shadow** by John Louis Stevenson.

In Prince Edward Island Brian Pollard has a fine cut of his half-hour film called **Farmers Helping Farmers** which concerns a group of PEI farmers who decided to become active in Third World and development issues and organized an exchange between farmers in P.E.I. and Kenya. Now they are involved in a number of projects in Kenya and Tanzania for which they actively fund-raise. The film, which is slated for completion by the end of March, delivers the message that ordinary people can be involved and effective in such issues. Meanwhile P.E. Islander Dave Ward is in Halifax editing a personal film project of his called **Retrieval** which is a documentary using the medium of sculpture.

Meanwhile at NIFCO (Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers Co-op), Derek Norman has started editing a film by Ed Rich called **Rollin's Progress**. This is a half-hour dramatic comedy which was shot in and around St. John's during this past summer and promises more of the patented NIFCO-style deranged comedy. Ex-

Vancouverite Debbie Macgee is shooting her half-hour dramatic film with the working title of **The New Poverty** about the world of the unemployed. Shooting is also taking place in St. John's. Ken Pittman and Red Ochre Productions are proceeding with **Finding Mary March**, their feature drama which was almost shot last summer, and which they now hope to shoot this year.

So although the festive season's Taiwan flu may have decimated our ranks somewhat, the east coast film community, fortified by suitable quantities of eggnog, is back in the saddle at their Steenbecks and cameras forging ahead into the New Year.

Seattle Cineplex

TORONTO - Theatre giant Cineplex-Odeon Corporation has agreed to buy a Seattle-based movie house chain with a total price tag of about \$45.5 million (U.S.).

Cineplex-Odeon bought Sterling Recreation Organization Co.'s 99 indoor screens and 15 drive-ins, which are located in Seattle, Tacoma, Tri-Cities, Spokane and Bellingham, Washington.

The purchase was made through Cineplex's wholly owned U.S. subsidiary and includes the costs of a major expansion program that is just about complete, a press release states.

Cineplex president Garth Drabinsky said the Seattle company has a reputation for quality theatres and operations. He added the Seattle area has a stable and prosperous theatre-going public.

With the purchase Toronto-based Cineplex will run 1,510 screens in 495 North American locations.

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SHOOT ALBERTA

by Linda Kupeccek

The annual Alberta Motion Picture Industries Association meeting was held in Edmonton, December 5. President Michael Hamm was succeeded by Alan Stein of Stein/MacLean productions, Edmonton. Other members of the new executive include Dale Hardy (v.p. Edmonton), Helene White (v.p. Calgary), and directors Marke Slipp, Glenn Ludlow, and Julian Smither.

In light of the usual winter slowdown of production, local film producers put CBC and Telefilm Canada reps to task.

Rudi Carter of CBC Toronto presented the corporation's latest "regional telefilm project guidelines." He said that although the CBC's goal is to replace all American programming with independently produced Canadian programming, budget restraints have to be dealt with. Hence, the "major challenge for Canadianization... has to be to give Canadians a sense of value for their money."

The new priority for regional projects lies in script development. CBC has earmarked \$70,000 of its total regional allotment to script and project

development. This fund will be distributed equally across the country and project development will be 'market-driven.' CBC also anticipates a 10:1 ratio of investment from Telefilm Canada.

Carter came under fire from members for CBC's stance on production allocations. Those, too, will be 'market-driven,' with the emphasis placed on short (one-half or one-hour-long) dramas, comedies, and variety or music specials.

Alberta producers repeated their concern that such policies discriminate against provinces outside Ontario and Quebec. Alan Stein said "those who live far from the centre are at a decided disadvantage to vent our ideas." He used the NFB system to support his statement that dedicated funding does not affect the quality of projects that are produced.

"There's no appreciable difference between what is produced in the regions and in Montreal."

Linda Beath of Telefilm Canada also criticized the CBC for its lack of support of regional production. Although Telefilm Vancouver approved 23 of 28 proposals last year, CBC sup-

ported fewer than 50 percent of those. She estimated the actual acceptance ratio to be about "29 percent on 23 projects."

Like Carter, however, she side-stepped the issue of dedicated funding from Telefilm. Funds should be directed to regions where it is "warranted by quality," she said. That quality is determined by the specific project. "I address quality as a per project issue."

Stein also rejected Telefilm's claims of support for regional filmmakers. "Their 98 percent acceptance rate (of projects) represents less than 10 percent of the actual productions. We do not have access to the licenses, and so western production represents only a small percentage of Telefilm's spending."

Complaints from western producers have been so consistent that the provincial organizations have formed an alliance. The Western Provincial Motion Picture Industry Association marries AMPIA, SMPA, BCPIA, and MAPS. Stein calls it a "formalized communications system" that sprung out of similar complaints.

"In January last year at Montebello everyone thought the western provinces were caucusing in advance because our lines were so consistent."

The alliance met in Saskatoon last November and discussed policy toward Telefilm Canada, the CBC, and the Task Force for Non-Theatrical Film Industry. The western group sees itself as a consolidation of forces. It is dedicated to what Glenn Ludlow called "equalization between regions and major parts of the industry, including Telefilm and CBC."

Their mandate calls for autonomous decision-making from a western Telefilm office, and a greater proportion of funds and air-time allocated to western production from CBC.

Production, in the meantime, has slowed drastically. Stone Fox resumed shooting outside of Canmore, Alberta, early in January. The crew had to be pulled back together for another five days of shooting because there wasn't enough snow before Christmas.

Contrary to previous reports in Shoot Alberta, the feature tentatively planned for West Edmonton Mall is not a joint venture between Alliance and Stein/MacLean. Allan Stein is not **Going For Broke**.

TORONTO - Telefilm Canada is set to release a manual for unit publicists by mid-February. The Handbook and Guide for Unit Publicity has been researched and written by Julia Frittaion, marketing officer with Telefilm, unit publicist and former co-ordinator of the Vancouver Trade Fair.

Sundance and Cdn Showcase

TORONTO - The renewed strength of an invigorated Canadian movie industry has attracted the attention of an American film festival.

The 1987 United States Film Festival at Park City, Utah, featured a selection of 21 Canadian documentary, feature and short films that were produced in the last four years.

The festival, held January 16-25, also included a panel discussion called Canada: The Next Wave. At the panel Canadian film experts discussed current Canadian movies as well as the industry's future.

Piers Handling, a programmer for the Festival of Festivals, said he was approached at the Toronto festival last year to set up the Park City Canadian film program.

He selected Canadian films and documentaries including **Anne Trister, Dancing in the Dark, The Decline of the American Empire, The Final Offer, My American Cousin, Loyalties, Pouvoir intime, Stations, Ranch and John and the Missus.**

Handling said Australian films were featured at the United States festival last year and this year American or-

ganizers decided to take a close look at films from north of the border.

"They felt that it was the coming cinema - the new national cinema to be watched," Handling said in an interview with *Cinema Canada*.

He said the festival organizers generally sensed that there is a renaissance occurring in Canadian cinema.

The films selected represent a strong independent vision and taken together provide a cross-section of Canadian cinema. New and older Canadian talent is represented as well as work from the different Canadian regions, he explained.

The Park City festival's look at Canadian cinema is very significant, he said.

Handling explained that outside Canada "this is the first film festival that has concentrated on the new Canadian cinema."

The United States Film Festival is organized by Robert Redford's Sundance Institute, which was set up as a learning institute for independent filmmakers in the United States.

Some of the Canadians slated to attend the festival include Linda Beath from Telefilm Canada, directors Sandy Wilson and Leon Marr, and producers Peter O'Brian, Roger Frappier and Claude Bonin.

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FRONTS WEST

by Kathryn Allison

Andra Scheffer, executive director of the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television, was in town in early January to host the Vancouver kickoff of the Academy's cross-country screenings for the Genie awards.

While 24 features, 12 documentaries, 10 live-action short dramas and 8 animated shorts were entered, the Vancouver screenings were restricted to features. The only feature entry from B.C. this year was Harry Coles' (Erin Films) outdoorsy kidnap adventure **Abducted**, which Boon Collins directed last summer. Harry's wife, Marilyn, has formed a distribution entity called MCM (Modern Cinema Marketing) which is involved in the release of **Abducted**. MCM placed it with Famous Players for a test run in Vancouver and Edmonton recently and plan to open it in Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa in late January.

First Choice took English-language pay-television rights, with *Première Choix* going for a dubbed version. Foreign sales include RCA/Columbia (video) and Prism TV for the home video market in the U.S. and Canada. MCM is also representing five Canadian pictures and two U.S. features at the upcoming American Film Market — not bad for a brand new company.

Erin Films is now in development (with First Choice development money) on another murder/adventure called **Lighthouse** which should begin principal photography in mid-April, with Boon Collins directing and Robert McLachlin doing camerawork. Meanwhile, Collins is off vacationing in Mexico, while McLachlin heads for the Philippines to shoot a documentary.

Also at the screenings were Jack Darcus, who has been busy in Toronto directing three **Airwaves** episodes this winter. He hopes to return to the Coast in February and get

back to his other love — painting. Ray Hall was there, and informally announced that he's stepping down as President of the British Columbia Film Industry Association (BCFIA). He hopes to gain more time to pursue producing and teaching. A new president will be elected at the end of January.

The Vancouver office of the Academy is waiting for the pre-selection process for the National Apprenticeship Training Program to be completed in Toronto so that a Vancouver jury can be set up to choose the Western winners (two will be chosen from B.C., and two from Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba combined). The winners, which will be announced in March, will receive 16 weeks of training in the technical/craft area of their choice.

Application forms will be available at the end of January for any Westerners who are interested in submitting short films to the Academy's first annual Canadian Independent Short Film Showcase, which will award honorariums to the winners, and provide 35mm blowups to be distributed to exhibitors across the country.

The Vancouver International Film Festival offices have moved downtown (as will the festival itself if festival director Hannah Fisher gets her way) to 303-788 Beatty Street, V6B 2M1, tel.: 685-0266. Fisher is attending a film festival in India this month and will return to Vancouver via Toronto. Her plans for the next festival include another tribute to a Canadian filmmaker (last year's, the first, was to Norman Jewison), and an annual program of new Canadian films. No word yet on whether the festival will be switched from the early summer to the fall.

Meanwhile, over at the Telefilm office, Wayne (he's cute, but where do you put the paper?) Sterloff is taking his xerox machine label by Daryl Duke with characteristic good

humour. He's been busy moving his office across the street to 1200-1185 West Georgia Street, V6E 4E6. Same phone, same fax.

Speaking of moving, there has been a bit of a reverse to the usual trend of producers moving east. Toronto producer Michael Lebowitz has moved to Vancouver and, while he's settling in, he is very graciously assisting the Praxis Screenwriter's Workshop in setting up a producers' seminar for the spring. Rumours are that a husband and wife team who worked at the executive level on **Turtle Diary** are in love with the Coast and are planning to move here. Also, Australian Richard Davis is now living here with his Vancouver-born wife. She's working on **Airwolf**, and he's quietly checking out the Canadian scene. He has already signed to associate produce **Visa** with Charles Wilkinson and Cal Shumiatcher.

Sandy Wilson got a free trip to Toronto as *Chatelaine's* Woman of the Year — in addition to having a lot of fun, the free trip saved her one \$1,000 cup of coffee. In December she directed a half-hour comedy with Candice Bergen, Jackson Davies and Bruno Gerussi for the Zorah Productions/CBC/PBS anthology series **Lies From Lotus Land** (CBC's name). Insiders say it's going to be another award-winner for the Vancouver director. She's working on a second draft of her script **Broken Dates**, which is backed by the CBC, and is reading scripts that are coming to her from the States. So far, she won't predict what her next project will be and is keeping her options open.

Thomas Howe (THA Media Distributors) is in development on a co-production with the NFB and CBC (regional offices) to produce a biography of Tom's grandfather, C.D. Howe. Howe, a member of McKenzie King's wartime Cabinet, enacted the legislation that created the CBC and was founder of Air Canada. Thomas Howe is looking to do two versions of the story: an

hour-long for television and a half-hour version for schools.

Howe is spending most of January and February at the U.S. markets pitching a number of projects which include a five-picture package of Western features, and a pilot for a celebrity outdoor comedy series called **Breakaway (with Terry and the Tiger)**. The pilot, which was shot last August in Campbell River, B.C. is hosted by Terry David Mulligan and Tiger Williams who talk with John Candy while fishing in the great outdoors. The production company, Fame (Foster and Mulligan Entertainment) is run by Terry David Mulligan and David Foster, the Canadian record producer and composer who recently produced **Tears Are Not Enough**. They are hoping to cut deals in the U.S. and in Canada for the series which will feature assorted artists from the film and music industries in various outdoor activities.

Howe's company seems to be expanding in all directions. He credits Telefilm's Wayne Sterloff for steering him toward theatrical distribution and introducing him to David Winning's feature **Storm**, to which Howe now has worldwide rights. He has hired some new people to help with the non-theatrical side of things including Roberta Columbin (former head of acquisitions and scheduling at Access) to head educational broadcast sales, Janine McCaw, who has moved from Toronto to handle syndicated television sales, and Christiane Cote who is now assisting Paulette Kerr in non-theatrical distribution.

The company has picked up world-wide distribution of Hy Perspective Media Group's documentary **A Life of Independence**, and reports good response at the London Market to the West Coast Native Indian series which Howe is co-distributing with Canadian Filmmakers Distribution West (Cari Green).

In addition, Howe is actively seeking partners to join him in a project which involves revising 71 short educational films

from Universal Education Visual Arts (UEVA) library. Howe has been the Canadian distributor of the films since 1979, and recently signed an agreement with MCA (which also owns Universal City Studios Inc.) for the worldwide distribution rights to the library. According to Howe the films, which vary in length from 10 minutes to one hour and were made in the U.S. from 1965 to 1979, and are of very high quality. He hopes to make the revisions in Canada and meet Cancon requirements so that broadcasters can be wooed as well as the educational market.

The New Play Centre has a new television writers program scheduled for February. Cherie Thiessen (**Beachcombers**, **King of Kensington**) will teach the six-week course, which will focus on conceptualizing and writing specifically for half-hour television series. 12 writers will participate in the workshop. Also, the New Play Centre is developing six new half-hours for the CBC's **Lies From Lotus Land** series. The organization had already assisted in developing two scripts for the series: Sherman Snuckel's **Market Forces** which was shot in January, and John Lazarus' **Our Last Saturday** which will shoot in February.

By the end of January, Praxis Screenwriters Workshop will have chosen eight writers for their spring screenwriters session, which begins in late February for a week-long workshop with guest writers Sharon Riis, Kit Carson (who was a big hit at the fall session) and Ted Allan (**Love Streams**, **Lies My Father Told Me**) among others.

As well as the writing workshop, there will be a public seminar held on an as yet undisclosed topic, as well as public screenings of the films that the guest writers have worked on. The group reconvenes in May, when the writers meet with a rotating group of experts (directors, art directors, cinematographers and producers) to continue working the scripts towards production.

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LETTER FROM LONDON

by Stephen Challis

It seems that there is a growing unease among European producers about the state of European cinema within the global setting. This assertion is borne out by the number of conferences that have been staged, or are upcoming, on the topic. In London, Jeremy Isaacs, Chief Executive for Channel 4 Television in the U.K. quipped: "Talking about the film and television industries is the largest growth industry in Europe today." Isaacs made his comment at a conference called European Film and Television: A Partnership, held in October in London. The conference was organized by the British Film Institute and supported by the Commission of the European Communities. It brought together some of the most powerful film and television producers in Europe to discuss, as it says in the conference brochure: "the reshaping of Europe's moving image culture and the development of a Community Film and Television Policy."

Most of the time, conference delegates spoke on this topic, although their views on the extent to which European cinema could and/or need be re-

shaped varied considerably. Jack Lang, the former minister of culture in France, who a week before had appeared along with Jeremy Isaacs at a similar conference in Rimini, Italy, spoke, at length, about building a European cinema based on its component parts: that is the various national film and television industries. Speaking in French, Lang said, "We do not want a cinematic esperanto. To build a strong culture you have to work with what you have at home." Lang commented that the reason that England has the best television industry and France has the best film industry in the world is that they are both national in focus.

Richard Luce, U.K. minister of the arts, took a position somewhat different to Lang's. He said that "increased practical co-operation on a European basis is a major objective which we should have before us." Luce called for a pan-national cinema which would be able to compete effectively on a world scale: "We must resolve to produce programs of equal appeal to Europe's mass audiences, or perhaps even more important, of appeal to

the specialized European markets which undoubtedly exist. This is necessary for all sorts of reasons, not least our individual cultural identities. But it is also important to correct the transatlantic imbalance, to project Europe's cultural identity in the United States and at the same time perhaps bring an honest profit to our program industries."

The notion of a pan-national, or pan-European cinema was central to much of the discussion at the conference. A majority of the speakers indicated that such a cinema will emerge in the coming years, but how and why it will do so remained moot points. Since no working filmmaker was asked to address the conference, the question as to whether or not the creative vision for a pan-European cinema exists remained unanswered, although there was a film series of contemporary European cinema happening in the evenings.

It was a conference of producers, bureaucrats and academics and the discussion focused on questions of policy and finance. Of highest concern was the question: can the film and television industries work together to strengthen European cinema overall?

Gunther Witte, Head of Television Drama in West Germany was asked to describe the experience in his country where co-operation between film and television has, arguably, produced good results. He noted that since 1974 over 300 films have been made with the aid of television, including work by Fassbinder, Wender, Petersen, Herzog, and Von Trotta. He also noted that the German system is not without its faults; notably that some of the films produced were aesthetic and or financial failures and that state involvement in production inherently introduces an element of censorship. Witte expressed doubt

about the workability of a pan-European production system based on the German model: "The worry is that the inclusion of film and television into the mechanisms of the European Community might well contribute to a bureaucratization rather than to a progressive development," he said.

Jeremy Isaacs of U.K. Channel 4 echoed Witte's comments: "We cannot necessarily take a model that works well in one society and impose it on another society, or group of societies, these arrangements have to grow from within."

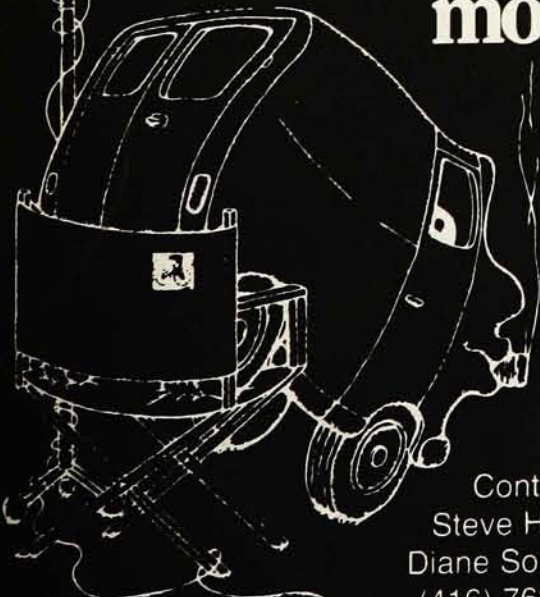
Some of the delegates spoke against pan-Europeanism, including Paulos Zannos, who recently resigned his post as head of the Greek Film Centre, an agency responsible for promoting Greek national cinema and Eckart Stein, a German television producer. Both Stein and Zannos argued for policies which will insure strong regional cinema. Stein reminded the audience: "We must remember that culture in Europe has always been highly regulated, there is no reason we cannot continue to regulate so as to preserve our indigenous identities." Zannos warned the audience against film/television collaboration: "they are different media," he

said, "if we are not careful we will allow the magazine to destroy the novel."

A collaboration between film and television does not necessarily impede the development of a high-quality cinema, argued Bjorn Muller, Head of Fictional Programmes, Danish TV. He recounted the experience in Denmark where the subsidized film industry is able to exist only because of agreements in place which allow films to be shown on television after they close in the cinemas. Muller was supported in his views by Owen Edwards, Director of Welsh TV and Michael Algar, Chief Executive of the Irish Film Board. Both Wales and Ireland are trying to develop indigenous film industries.

A policy paper prepared by the Commission of the European Communities for the promotion and development of a European film and television industry was circulated amongst the delegates. It calls for an aid scheme to be directed at the various components of a European audio-visual industry. The paper generated no concrete proposals amongst the delegates. However, it will be the subject of a review by the various national communications ministers in the European Community.

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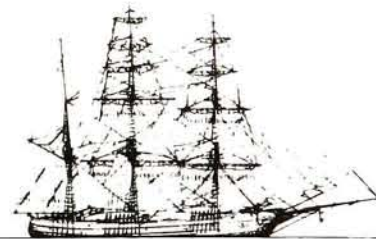


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Final Offer tops

CHICAGO - The Chicago International Film Festival has awarded a Gold Plaque to **The Final Offer**, a National Film Board documentary about the trials and tribulations of the Canadian auto workers union.

Co-directed by Sturla Gunnarsson and Robert Collison, the 79-minute film is about the Canadian union's struggle for autonomy from its U.S. parent in 1984.

Final Offer has won a Genie Award, Grand Prize at the Banff Television Festival and the Prix Italia.

The Gold Plaque in Chicago was also awarded to the film, in the social/political documentary category.

Italian Director, Bruno Pischiutta's Clockwise Productions: Producing for a World-Wide Market

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