

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 AMPA, SMPA, BCFA, 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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