

## FRONTS WEST

by Calvin Wharton & Mark O'Neill

There have been a few staff changes and additions at Cinema Canada on the West Coast:

Kathryn Allison left the magazine after almost a year of hard work to work even harder organizing the first Vancouver Film Festival Trade Forum. She has some other projects on the go and only a little time before beginning work on next year's Festival.

Calvin Wharton has been doing a good job pinchbitting for Kathryn and will continue to contribute as a writer. He's also involved in a number of literary organizations and publications.

Mark O'Neill is the new Chief Cook and Bottle Washer in Vancouver. He's a freelance writer and CBC broadcaster who specializes in the Arts. Over the next few months he'll be working to strengthen Cinema Canada's Western presence in terms of editorial content, distribution and advertising support.

Which brings us to Tim Trylinski, our news sales representative. Tim is a graduate of the Emily Carr Film School and is in the process of establishing his own three-man film company. He's also a Kung-Fu expert, which ought to do wonders when it comes to closing a sale.

Our new office phone number is 604-685-7661 or you can reach Tim at 683-7965. Now, on to other comings and goings:

\* \* \*

Petra Films, a Vancouver production company, will be producing a 90-minute docudrama on the first contact between Europeans and North American natives. The script is being written by playwright John Gray. Petra producer Ray Hall says the project has been endorsed by the Glenbow Museum in Calgary.

\* \* \*

Northern Lights is on schedule with their production of *The Outside Chance of Maximilian Glick*. The film begins shooting in Manitoba in early November.

Allan Goldstein is directing the film. Goldstein, a Canadian who lives in the U.S., has directed several American Playhouse specials, and received an Emmy nomination for his work on *The House of Dies Drear* for the PBS Wonderworks series.

\* \* \*

The Vancouver International Film Festival set a record this year for sponsor participation in the event. Sponsors ranged from Air Canada (who presented the Canadian Tribute Evening in honour of actress Helen Shaver) to The Commonwealth Foundation and The Asia Pacific Foundation (who helped present a wide selection of films from India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Hong Kong and other Asian countries).

The Industry Trade Forum, held in conjunction with the festival, offered, among its many events, a Native filmmakers' seminar. This seminar was the first major gathering of New Zealand and Western Canadian natives to discuss the emergence of film in their cultures.

\* \* \*

The British Columbia Film and Video Industry Association (BCFIA) is starting a producers' service for B.C. filmmakers, which will provide a script library, a reference library, a computer record of all B.C. production companies and services, workshops and seminars, and a monthly newsletter. Natalie McGowan, coordinator of the BCFIA, says there may even be translation and professional consulting services.

The association has also just published *Selling It*, a marketing guide for international distribution, written by BCFIA president Chris Bruyère.

November 24 and 25 are the dates for member-screenings in Vancouver of nominations for 1987 Gemini awards for English-language, Canadian television programs. The screenings are for Academy of Cana-

dian Cinema and Television members only and will be held at the CBC.

\* \* \*

The *Lies From Lotusland* series will present a mixture of old and new in its winter season. Along with contemporary productions, the series will feature a number of older shows, including some live-to-air programs from the '50s.

Episodes of *Caribou Country*, such as *The Education of Phyllistine* and *Antoine's Wooden Overcoat* (with a cameo appearance by Chief Dan George) will delight old-time television aficionados.

\* \* \*

Wayne Sterloff's move down the hall to the new Film BC office leaves a vacancy at Telefilm's Vancouver operation. While the search for a new regional manager is underway, Bill Niven is keeping matters under control. Bill is a former Atlantic regional manager for Telefilm, now on loan from the Toronto office. He says he's torn between expediting the hiring process and delaying his return to a Toronto winter.

## Martinique hosts festival

MONTREAL - Entries from Canada will be among the 21 feature films shown at the Festival of Francophone Cinema, Oct. 31-Nov. 7 in Martinique.

Organized, for the first time, by l'Association Française du Cinéma Francophone under the patronage of the government of France, the festival will include entries from Canada, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Africa and Maghreb.

Ten films will enter competition for the best in five categories to be selected by a seven-member jury.

## Videotron to expand

MONTREAL - Vidéotron, Quebec's largest cable company, has announced plans to expand from a current 36 channels to 52 channels including 16 interactive electronic shopping channels.

With a Vidéotron investment of \$35 million over the next three years, the French-language cable company hopes to

increase subscriber penetration on Montreal's South Shore from 62 per cent (265,000) to 100 per cent.

TORONTO - Filmmaker Joyce Wieland and CityTV boss Moses Znaimer were two of eight recipients at this year's Toronto Arts Awards.

Wieland received the award in the Visual Arts category with Znaimer collecting his award in Media Arts. The winners receive \$5,000 each.

## SCREENWRITER'S WORKSHOP

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# Producer Group to distribute, market films/TV full-time

TORONTO - Citing unprecedented growth in the Canadian feature film and television industry, a new marketing and distribution company has been launched here.

Producers Group Interna-

tional, Inc. will focus on international and domestic television distribution, as well as program development, financing and sales for independent producers and marketing strategies for major corporations.

Charles Falzon, formerly president of the Toronto production and distribution company Taffner and Associates, is president of the new venture that has also been launched with a New York City office.

Falzon explained the new company is being set up because "we feel the industry is at a plateau." He said Producers Group will primarily distribute and market television series, but also feature films.

"Distribution isn't a part-time activity. If you're in distribution you have to be in with both feet," he explained.

Falzon, who was executive in charge of production for the CTV television series **Check It Out**, told *Cinema Canada* that Producers Group has "substantial" financial backing from venture capital firm Helix Investments Limited. Falzon wouldn't reveal capitalization of Producers' Group. Helix is headed by Ben Webster, a member of the family of *Globe and Mail* fame and that also owned *Saturday Night* magazine.

The chief executive officer of Producers Group is Gary Howsam, formerly the president of Greenlight Productions Ltd., an animation, video production and computer graphics firm.

Dennis O'Neill, vice-president of distribution, told a crowded room at a Toronto press conference that "all we want to be is the Edmonton Oilers of Canadian distribution."

O'Neill, who previously ran his own television distribution company and, before that, was head of program sales at CBC Enterprises, announced that Producers Group has made a deal with Canadian independent production house Lauron Productions to distribute their movies around the world.

Michael Anderson is executive producer of the new company. Anderson recently directed **The Jeweller's Shop**, a love story written by a young Pope John Paul II. Among other films, Anderson also directed the Academy Award-winning **Around the World In 80 Days** starring David Niven and Shirley MacLaine.

Producers Group and Amicad International have also acquired rights to the book *The Sky's No Limit*, the life story of Canadian pilot, journalist and adventurer Raymond Zebulon Munro.

Other projects the new venture is developing include: - the making of five episodes as a pilot for a new situation comedy. The shows will be made in conjunction with independent producer David Patterson and are to be developed for American and Canadian syndication; - a package of eight feature films that will involve Australian, United Kingdom and Italian co-production arrangements; - a 90-minute drama series pilot, a game show, a soap opera and a two-part docudrama. These shows are in various stages of development and are being made in conjunction with independent producers.

## MULTIPLE CHOICE IN TORONTO

► Complete the following by placing a check mark in the appropriate box.

*I'm shooting my next production in Toronto because ...*

**a.** Toronto is the third-largest film and video production centre in North America.

**b.** Production budgets buy more in Toronto.

**c.** Toronto's locations adapt to time and place.

**d.** Toronto Film Liaison provides a comprehensive service that is fast, efficient, and free.

**e.** ALL of the above.

For the correct answer, and a lot more, contact:

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