

## FRONTS WEST

by Calvin Wharton & Mark O'Neill

The British Columbia Film and Video Industry Association celebrated the end of an active and exciting year for the industry in the province, with a wrap party held at the B.C. Film Centre. Coralee Testar, a board member of the association, considers the attendance of more than 1,200 to be an indication of local industry health.

During the evening, five individuals from B.C. were honoured for their work and for their international reputations, which reflect well on the province. The tribute included the dedication of trees to be planted in a future garden area at the film centre.

Those honoured were: Producer Peter O'Brian (**Grey Fox, My American Cousin, John and the Missus**); Michael J. Fox; Phil Borsos; Daryl Duke; and Leonard George was present to accept a tribute to the memory of his father on behalf of the Chief Dan George Memorial Society.

Two West Coast award – winners also worth noting: Rob McLachlan took home Best Cinematography honors from the 1987 Karlovy Vary International Festival of Tourist Films. Also, Brent Harron, who provides advertising art for a variety of companies, was honored by Graphics '87 Awards for Excellence in Illustration. We hope to see his work in *Cinema Canada* before long.

Praxis Script Development Workshop has just completed its first full year of operation. "We started modestly," says Patricia Gruben, Praxis director, "but things have exceeded our expectations." From the last session alone, five scripts are in development or have received serious attention from producers, Gruben says.

Since it began, Praxis has hosted seminars and workshops with an impressive list of filmmakers, including Sharon Riis, Kit Carson, Hanif Kureishi, Stuart Kaminsky, Dan Petrie, Paul Cox and others.

"For our spring [1988] workshop we've received 61 scripts," Gruben says. "They're from all over the country, more from Toronto than in the past, and there is a good variety of work."

February 2 is the deadline for the next workshop, which will deal with directors working with actors, and will focus on solving problems.

Women In Focus attended the Western Canadian Film and Video Showcase in Banff in late November, and had some success there with several of their new acquisitions. Among these are **Closing the Gap**, a film by Annie O'Donoghue and Julie Warren celebrating the accomplishments and contribution of women athletes; and **Keep the Home Fires Burning**, the first of a two-part video by Sara Diamond on women's labour history in Canada.

Women In Focus has also signed a contract with the Australian Film Commission Women's Unit for exclusive rights to non-theatrical distribution of their films in Canada.

And beginning in March, WIF will offer a series of workshops on all aspects of video production.

In the continuing-saga-of department, the Northern Lights production, **The Outside Chance of Maxmillian Glick** has been upgraded from a made-for-TV film to a full-blown feature. Filmed in association with the NFB, the CBC, Telefilm Canada, the Manitoba Cultural Industries Development Office, and Film B.C., the project has picked up a Canadian distributor, the Malofilm Group.

Outdoor shooting in Winnipeg, which is to include a Christmas scene, is proceeding well, but without the cooperation of the weather. The film needs snow and Winnipeg in early December was revelling in one of its balmiest winters on record.

Casting on the film includes 14-year-old Noam Zylberman (**Night Heat, Adderley**) as Max, Saul Rubineck as Rabbi Teitleman, Sairuza Balk (**Dorothy in Return to Oz**), and Jan and Susan Rubes.

A warm West Coast welcome to the new executive director of the B.C. Film & Video Association, Robert Dubberley. He recently served as executive director of the Vancouver Centennial Committee and, before that, worked on the Commonwealth Games and was executive producer of the Charlottetown Festival.

Two renewals at Cannell Films that will keep crews busy during the rainy season. **Wiseguy** starring Ken Wahl has been extended to 20 episodes (on CBS) and will be shooting through February. **21 Jump Street** (Fox) has added nine episodes so they'll be around until March.

The Yorkton Short Film & Video Festival was on the phone the other day with news of a new

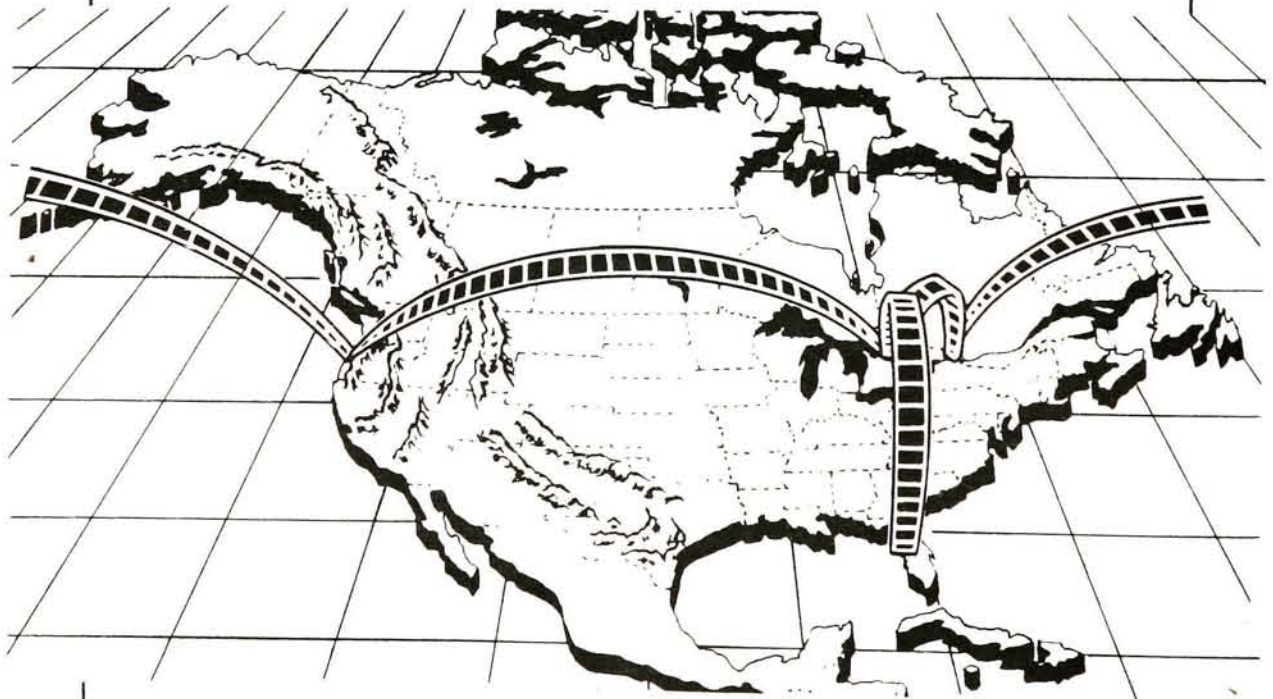
award category. The Kathleen Shannon (Studio D founder) Documentary Award will go to an independent project that "provides an opportunity for people outside the dominant culture to express their perspective." It carries a \$1,000 prize.

Deadline for entries to Yorktown is April 20th. Altogether there are 15 categories. For details contact: Catherine DeGrysi, 49 Smith Street East, Yorkton, Saskatchewan, S3N 0H4 (306) 782-7077.

To conclude, an update on our first three months as the *Cinema Canada* team in Vancouver:

It was been gratifying to meet many members of the B.C. Film community, all of whom have been helpful in letting us know what's going on. Without a doubt this is a busy industry,

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well-populated with creative, hard-working individuals.

It's also been helpful to hear your comments about this magazine and how it could be improved. One of the consistent concerns has been distribution in the West. Beginning with the December issue we have taken over responsibility from the Canadian Periodical Publishing Association and are distributing the magazine ourselves in Vancouver. This will

mean more copies on more newsstands much faster than the CPPA was able to deliver. We're pleased that so many new subscribers have indicated their interest and support.

We're also pleased to announce that Nancy Kennedy has taken on the considerable challenge of acting as Sales Representative. "Challenge" because *Cinema Canada* evolves in a competitive environment: B.C. filmmakers are in the habit of looking south to the U.S. rather than east, and there is a feeling

*Cinema Canada* should contain more western content—but we feel there are positive responses. Over the next couple of months, Nancy will be working with the advertisers and the editorial staff to provide improved service and address those problems. She can be reached at 255-0259.

It's important for the film industry in B.C. and the West to stay in touch with the rest of the country. We hope *Cinema Canada* will become an important tool in that communication.

## Genie films to public in B.C. show

VANCOUVER — It generally takes some time for films to cross the Rockies to screens in British Columbia. Even big American blockbusters are slow to hit Vancouver; Canadian features sometimes never arrive.

This is especially annoying when it comes time for the Genie Awards. Quite simply, many Vancouver filmgoers don't know anything about the nominees.

For the second year running

the Ridge Theatre and the *Georgia Straight* newspaper are presenting a six-day marathon screening of the Genie films. Individual films are \$5, a series pass is only \$20. Here is the complete schedule:

Fri., Jan. 8 — **Life Classes**. Sat., Jan. 9 — 12:00 — **Blindside**; 2:00 — **The Carebears — Adventures in Wonderland**; 4:00 — **Blue City Slammers**; 6:00 — **Caribe**; 8:00 — **The Climb**; 10:00 — **Concrete Angels**. Sun., Jan. 10 — 12:00 — **Crazy Moon**; 2:00 — **The Great Land of Small**; 4:00 — **Dreams Beyond Memory**; 6:00 — **Family Viewing**; 8:00 — **Brother Andre**; 10:00 — **Hello Mary Lou: Prom Night II**. Mon., Jan. 11 — 2:00 — **Hitting Home**; 4:00 — **Home Is Where the Hart Is**; 6:00 — **I've Heard the Mermaids Singing**; 8:00 — **The Last Straw**; 10:00 — **The Legend of Wolf Lodge**. Tues., Jan. 12 — 2:00 — **Marie S'en Va-T-en Ville**; 4:00 — **Night Friend**; 6:00 — **Le Sourd dans la Ville**; 8:00 — **Taking Care**; 10:00 — **Too Outrageous**. Wed., Jan. 13 — 4:00 — **Train of Dreams**; 6:00 — **The Young Magician**; 8:00 — **Un Zoo la Nuit**.

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## BC Women in Film

VANCOUVER — A local chapter of Women in Film, a professional association for women working in film and video, has been formed in Vancouver. The organization, which began about 10 years ago in Los Angeles, now has branches throughout the U.S. and in Toronto.

Suzanne Depoe, president of the Toronto chapter, attended the recent Vancouver International Film Festival and spoke with women there who were interested in beginning a B.C. group, including filmmakers Peggy Thompson, Carrie Green, Sarina Rotstein Cheikas and Barbara Janes, the B.C. regional director of the National Film Board of Canada.

"From the original group we formed an ad hoc committee and planned a second meeting," says Janes. "We expected about 50 or 60 women to show up, but there were over 100."

The focus of the group will be to provide activities of interest and support for women working in the industry. The organization is working on a constitution and plan to present workshops, films, guests. "The people involved will determine what we do," says Janes. "We are planning a directory of women working in the industry, locally." Besides being a forum for networking and professional development, the group here will be in touch with the other chapters, Janes says.