

Industry hurting as funds dry up

DesRoches welcome at TFC

MONTREAL – With the appointment of Pierre DesRoches as new executive director of Telefilm Canada (see People section), effective June 1, the most turbulent period in the agency's existence draws to a close, observers trust.

Under the interim direction of Michèle Fortin, the agency's finances were brought under control, finishing off the fiscal year March 31, 1988 without lapsing any funds and having only committed \$30.7 million of the '88-'89 budget. The latter amount, committed to productions which are currently underway, is a normal carry-over, Fortin told *Cinema Canada*, and could not have been disbursed last year due to contractual conditions.

This is a credible and encouraging state of affairs, compared to the year-end '86-'87 which saw the agency lapse \$22 million of unspent funds.

The current fiscal year, however, will be more difficult, Fortin reports. Revenues to the agency from federal allocations are down and sales revenues are not expected to be as high next year as they were this year with the high-grossing *Decline of the American Empire* and *Night Zoo* pushing up profits.

In particular, the agency will now receive \$60 million each year for the Broadcast Fund; formerly, it had received \$300,000 to be spent over five years, and last year still had \$68,000 in the TFC coffers to spend.

As for sales, last year the agency received \$20 million in revenues but is only forecasting a modest \$12.5 million in the current year.

Despite the fact that the required management systems are now in place and that certain policy questions have been clarified, Fortin does not expect TFC to be able to meet the demand of producers this year, and the agency is searching for ways to augment their financial options. This is admittedly difficult in a year which has seen the federal government diminish the tax shelter for investment in production and fail to pass distribution legislation.

As for the policy questions, Fortin – in an open letter to producers dated April 8 – explained that TFC has once and for all removed the litigious 2.5 per cent administrative fee from TFC's transactions. She also clarified the agency's policy concerning series' renewals; "The dollar amounts granted for each hour... will not be larger this year than they were in the previous year, and these amounts must also represent a lower proportion of the production budget..." Last year had seen TFC increase its participation in renewed series, a move which would

ultimately deplete funds completely for other TV productions.

Fortin reports that feature production poses the greatest problem. "If producers can't raise their 50 per cent of the budget, all our help won't be enough and many projects may lapse." Her concern echoes that of the Quebec industry concerning the current year.

Fortin credits the staff at TFC with the success of the last period, insisting that its hard work permitted her to establish priorities and achieve major objectives. Currently, there are 121 jobs at Telefilm with 25 openings.

In turn, the minister of Communications and the TFC staff credit Fortin with a difficult job well done. She expects to return to her consulting firm, CGI Inc., by June 1.

DesRoches brings solid experience to TFC

MONTREAL – Pierre DesRoches is "a man with vision" says Toronto-based producer Don Haig. He is also the new executive director of Telefilm Canada following an announcement by Communications Minister Flora MacDonald.

The 56-year-old former Radio-Canada (CBC) executive was most recently a member of the Francophone Summit Follow-up Committee.

DesRoches will succeed Peter Pearson who resigned as executive director in October 1987. Telefilm has subsequently reorganized its management staff and operations.

In 1952 DesRoches joined the French Services division of the CBC in Montreal and became director in 1955. He later occupied a variety of positions at the Société Radio-Canada, including network supervisor of youth programming, managing director of French radio, director of development, vice-president of planning, executive vice-president, vice-president and general manager of French broadcasting services.

DesRoches told a recent Montreal press conference that he is pleased with the appointment at this stage in his career. He said Telefilm Canada provides a privileged position from which to influence Canadian cultural policy and that it is important that all sectors of the film and television industry will pull together to support policy.

Without Telefilm, the former CBC executive says that CBC cannot hope to reach its 95 per



PHOTO: HAZEL FIELD

Pierre DesRoches

cent Canadian content objective by the early 1990s.

The appointment is effective June 1, 1988.

Other Telefilm appointments, announced recently by Interim Director Michèle Fortin, focus on operations in Ontario.

Judy Watt, with Telefilm since 1984, has been appointed business affairs manager. Bill Niven is the new project development manager and Helen Paul is the project coordinator for Ontario.

Gilles Bériault, the former manager of operations in Montreal has been appointed manager of coproductions.

Industry on the skids in Quebec after budget

MONTREAL – The Quebec film and television industry suffered an unexpected blow recently when Lise Bacon, minister of Cultural Affairs, announced the 1988-1989 budget allocations for cultural industries in the province.

A proposed 5 per cent increase (or \$11 million) allocated for film and television through the newly organized Société générale des industries culturelles Québec (SOGIC) is "far from sufficient" to support the Quebec-based industry, says producer Rock Demers, main spokesperson at a press conference called by several sectors in the Quebec film and television industry.

He says the budget proposal does not take into account an increasing cost of living, direct costs which have increased on average by 35 per cent in the last four years, severely diminished tax shelters for film and television (both federal and

provincial) and the competitive onslaught that free trade will bring from the U.S.

Panelists at the Montreal press conference agreed that another \$10 million is needed.

There was also consternation that the government failed to create a television fund to be administered by the SOGIC, similar to Telefilm Canada's broadcast fund. Such a fund was expected with the recent folding of the Société Générale du Cinéma du Québec (SGCQ) into the broader SOGIC (effective March 30).

Demers, president of Association des producteurs de films et de vidéo du Québec, said the membership had approved the SGCQ/SOGIC integration on condition that the television fund be created.

"We were led to believe by the government last fall that this would be the case. Personally I don't have much hope that we will see any more money," Demers told *Cinema Canada*.

It is obvious, he says, that help is needed. The overall trend is towards independent television production and private financing does not come easily in a limited (French-language) market.

Where Quebec/France coproductions are concerned as an alternative to raising money in the domestic market, Demers says Quebec producers could have difficulty holding up their end of the deal.

"You have to wonder why the government worked so hard to establish good relations in this area (Quebec/France coproductions)," says Demers.

The panelists took steps to make it clear that, if properly supported, film and television can provide jobs and generate a profitable return on investments for the Quebec economy.

The most telling evidence of inadequate government support of film and television, according to a press conference communique, is the production of only seven SGCQ-funded feature films in 1987, down from 11 in 1986 and 12 in 1985.

Industry representatives at the conference were Micheline Charest, president of the Association québécoise des industries techniques du cinéma et de la télévision, producers Roger Frappier and Aimée Danis, Joseph Beaubien of the distributors' association, Iolande Cadrin-Rossignol of the Association des réalisateurs et réalisatrices de films du Québec and Pierre Blondin of the Syndicat des techniciennes et techniciens du cinéma du Québec.

Other organizations represented were the Société des auteurs, recherchistes, documentalistes et compositeurs and Union des artistes.

Telefilm forecasts '88-89

FINAL PROPOSAL

Here is the detailed ventilation of Telefilm Canada's total budget for 1988-89. Please note that the forecasted minimum revenues of \$7.5 M have been separated into Telefilm's different activities as follows:

	FRENCH	ENGLISH	SUB-TOTAL	TOTAL
DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION				
		(,000\$)		
TELEVISION development	2 100	4 200	6 300	
production	18 900	37 800	56 700	
SUB-TOTAL	21 000	42 000	63 000	
FEATURE FILMS development	767	1 533	2 300	
- production	6 900	13 800	20 700	
SUB-TOTAL	7 667	15 333	23 000	
OTHER PROJECTS - development	500	750	1 250	
- production	125	75	200	
SUB-TOTAL	625	825	1 450	
TOTAL	29 292	58 158	87 450	87 450
INTERIM FINANCING FUND				8 000

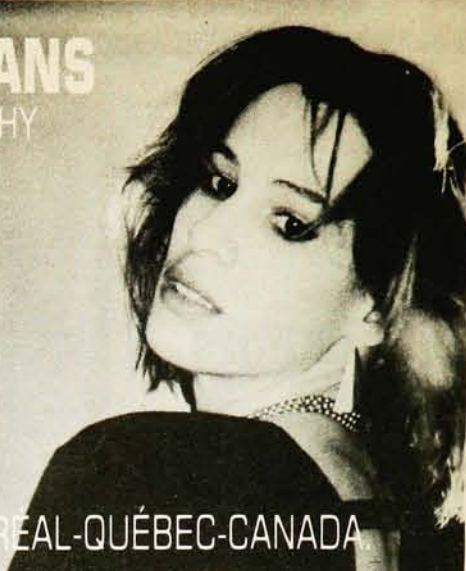
DISTRIBUTION-RELATED PROGRAMMES:

Corporate long-term loans (distribution and exportation)		1 500	
Versioning and dubbing assistance		4 000	
Distribution assistance in Canada		2 000	
International Marketing assistance		1 200	
Closed captioning for hearing-impaired		500	
Canadian participation in international cinema events		1 000	10 200

OTHER PROGRAMMES:


Grants to Canadian film and video festivals		1 600	
Industrial and professional development		1 350	
Initiatives for the promotion of the Canadian industry		950	3 900
Reserve for unforeseen events			250
Administration			12 200
TOTAL			122 000

N.B.: This budget includes the use of an amount of \$4.0 M of Telefilm's advance account and an additional revenue of \$5.0 M of which \$4.0 M are used for Telefilm's obligation to participate in the Museum Corporation.



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Distributors look for production ties

MONTREAL – The future of Canadian film lies in a stronger business relationship between producer and distributor, says Gilles Bériault, manager of coproductions at Telefilm Canada.

Bériault is among many industry insiders who are currently rethinking the shape of the Canadian film and television industry in the wake of a severe reduction in the Canadian Capital Cost Allowance for certified Canadian film. The industry is also hurting from the failure of the Mulroney government to deliver on a promise to provide legislation which would give Canadian distributors access to more profitable U.S. independent films.

Indeed, film distribution is the weakest link in the production/distribution/exhibition chain, says Bériault. Canadian distributors must compete among each other for a mere three per cent of screentime left (after films distributed by the U.S. majors) for Canadian films and the independent films that U.S. distributors don't want.

There is no question of competition with the Americans because they control the market with big box-office productions. The most Canadian distributors can hope for, says Bériault, is breaking even over the long-term with one or two profitable films.

In fact, he explains, without regular access to profitable films there are few, if any, compelling reasons why Canadian distributors stay in the business.

"The Canadian distributor is used to just keeping his nose above water," he says. "Once he gets into the business, he can't stop because he has investments to protect (product inventory for a second-run release or eventual television/video sales). He is constantly looking for that one picture that will make him a lot of money."

The domestic box-office success of *The Decline of the American Empire* or even that of *Un Zoo la nuit* represents a rare opportunity for distributors to exhibit their films in key Canadian cities. Films that open in Montreal and Toronto and do not break-even at the box-office will invariably be ignored by exhibitors elsewhere in Canada. During a good year, barely one-third of Canadian openings will go further than Toronto or Montreal.

"It's very difficult for the Canadian distributor in French and English Canada. He has one chance with a release. If it works in Toronto or Montreal, outside theatres will play it. If it dies, nobody will play it, especially if it is coming from small distributors who cannot promise a *Fatal Attraction* down the line," says Bériault.

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promise of profitable films after lesser films – that Canadians don't have and that Americans can use if, indeed, there is need for inducement.

This leverage is what Bériault calls "the locomotive that pulls all the little wagons." Leverage equals bargaining power. It assures the distributor better play-dates, better settlements and a stronger relationship with exhibitors.

"The Americans also distribute smaller pictures in Canada but they are not as noticeable. They stay for two or three weeks and are bumped out of the theatre by the next U.S. blockbuster," he says.

Thus, without a distribution law enabling

Canadian distributors to acquire several "locomotives" per year, Bériault says Canadian distributors and producers must think in terms of combining their scant resources to create commercially exploitative films like *The Gate*, a recent international box-office success produced by Alliance Entertainment and distributed by Alliance Releasing. Money plowed back into production from the distribution of this type of commercial feature would support the less commercial *auteur* films that Canadian filmmakers excel in and that Canadian distributors are more adept at handling than the Americans.

Canadian companies with a strong producer/

distributor component will lead the Canadian film industry into the future, says Bériault, citing Alliance, Cinema Plus, Norstar, and the Malofilm Group.

For its part, Telefilm Canada covers promotional expenses with distributors on a 50/50 recoupment basis in its National Distribution Program.

"This helps to create a cash flow," says Bériault. "In effect, we are saying to exhibitors that there is promotional money available and that distribution will hold up its end."

Another loan program provides distributors

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with a maximum of \$500,000. It was used in some cases to provide a minimum revenue guarantee for private investors in film. Although the CCA tax shelter program is for all intents and purposes ineffective, the loan is still available and can be used for financial structuring rather than as revenues. It is questionable, however, whether anyone will apply for it this year, says Bériault.

Bériault argues that Telefilm is not engaged in a losing battle in its attempt to help distributors find a bigger share of the Canadian market.

"We are not throwing good money after bad. We are throwing good money after good films that do not have a chance to penetrate a small market."

The only solution, he says, is access to "big films."

Says the Telefilm representative, "Without this access the only thing we are doing is buying time."

Changes in B.C. Film policy

VANCOUVER - B.C. Film is changing some of its policies governing distribution financing, script development funding and internships. Chairman Wayne Sterloff announced the revisions at the end of March.

B.C. Film's board of directors has decided to expand the Production Financing Program to include some distribution expenses; the costs of prints and advertising are given as examples. Sterloff says, "If a B.C. based producer and his partners would care to work with a B.C. based distributor, such a distributor can bring real resources to the mix. If having a distributor committed to your project is going to help you package, then, as a producer, this expansion of policy should help."

Ceilings on participation will not change and the guidelines require that producer and distributor apply separately and then enter into further agreements with the provincial agency.

Other rules changes allow B.C. producers a choice when applying for funding; Sterloff says they may now seek either a low-interest loan or equity participation.

"A producer or writer may find it advantageous to keep our involvement as a loan," says Sterloff. "However, if servicing such a loan presents a cash-flow problem... we are now in a position to consider advancing funds toward script development as an equity partner."

The third change is aimed at B.C. Film's internship program. Effective immediately the maximum contribution of \$300 per week can be paid to a "Master Writer" who has agreed to work with an intern. Previously the money was payable to the intern only.

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MacDonald retains difficult ministry

TORONTO - With an election in the near future, Flora MacDonald's survival as minister of Communications in the recent cabinet shuffle is good news, according to Canadian Film and Television Association president Sam Jephcott.

"We don't have to worry about educating a new minister," Jephcott said.

The April shuffle, seen by most observers as a pre-election move to beef up the Cabinet, saw the more affable John Crosbie given Pat Carney's job of selling free trade, but MacDonald retains responsibility for pushing through - in this parliamentary session - the broadcast and distribution legislation affecting the film and television industries.

"Thank God we haven't got somebody new in Communications whose only interest is in planning for the next election, rather than dealing with the enormous agenda that is going through there," Jephcott added.

"I have no idea whether she is staying because Brian Mulroney loves her, or because there is no one else looking to go in there and face the barrage of attacks that her ministry has had to endure over the last little while. It's a particularly tough job at this moment."

A new minister, Jephcott said, might have held up Telefilm appointments or legislation in months of "further study."

"The PMO has decided that Flora MacDonald is not going to cost the government one vote anywhere. If Flora doesn't cost them any votes, that's the best thing I could hear."

Educational production drying up, report claims

TORONTO - Canada's indigenous educational film and video production is slowly drying up and will eventually die altogether, according to a report released last month.

The "Industry Profile," released by the Educational Media Producers and Distributors Association of Canada, tabs dwindling government funding as the major reason for the decline in the educational non-theatrical market. EMPDAC is responsible for 80 per cent of the sales of educational audio-visual materials in Canada.

The study, researched and written by retired educational media expert James Miller, notes that "spending in Canada, in 1986, for the acquisition of non-theatrical films, videotapes and all other kinds of learning materials was only slightly more than 56 per cent of what was spent in 1975 (in 1975 dollars)."

Since most of the buyers of this material - schools, colleges, universities and libraries - are publicly funded, the amount of money federal and provincial governments put into these institutions has a direct effect on the health of the nontheatrical industry. According to the report, steadily declining funding will result in "the total collapse of educational nontheatrical production in the private sector in Canada, and a diminished private sector distribution network dependent almost entirely upon materials produced in some other country."

The report was called for and financed in part by the Department of Communications as a follow-up to the 1986 report "The Other Film Industry," but a casual survey of the relevant ministry officials revealed that it suffered from a fairly low profile.

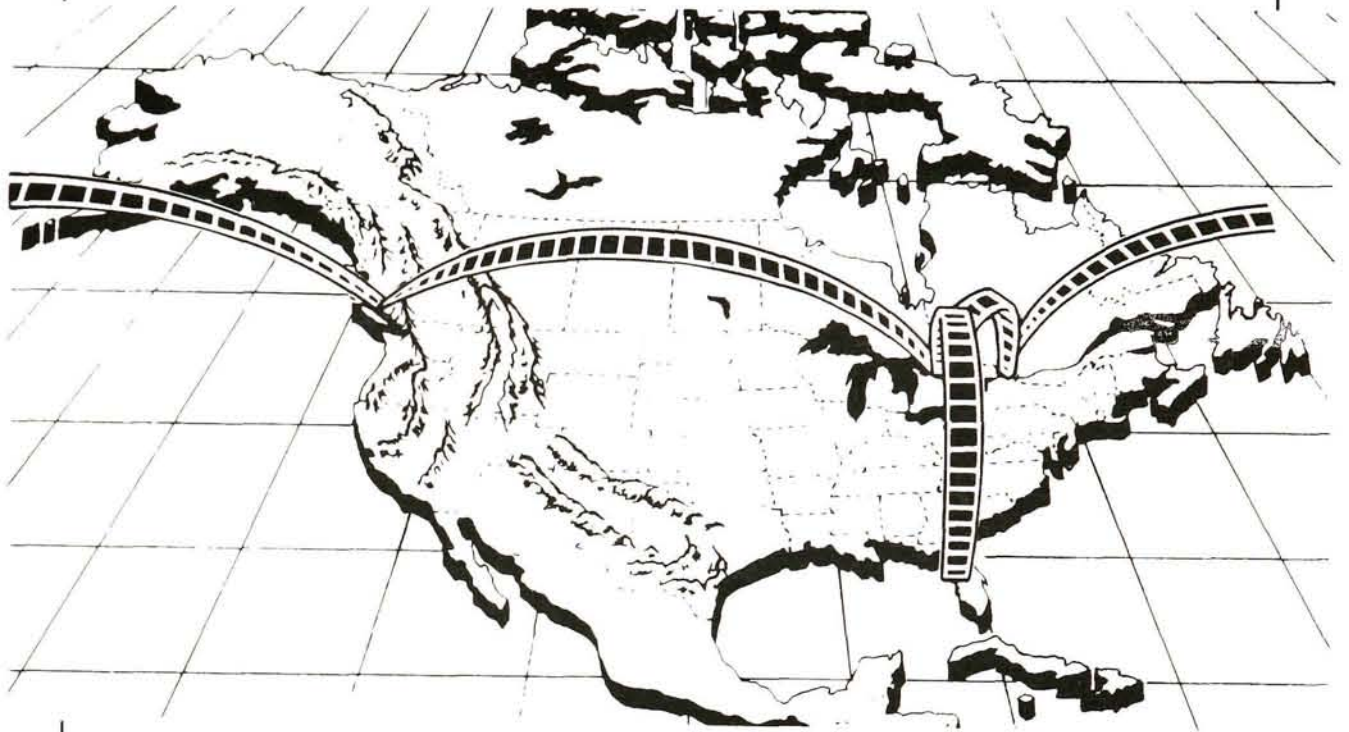
"I'm not personally aware of it," said one Communications spokesperson, although she did admit that the name EMPDAC "rings a bell."

"There's such a small amount of Canadian product coming on the market," said Miller, "other than things like *Degrassi Junior High*, or some of the things that are being produced by TVO or Access Alberta. There's not much from the CBC, and there's very little that's directed at schools."

"There was really a thriving industry in Canada 20 years ago, or even less than that... Funding dried up, school boards started trimming budgets, and they had other priorities. More recently it's been the acquisition of microcomputer technology."

And the threats that haunt the theatrical industry - free trade and tax legislation, for example - won't mean much to a sector already crippled by neglect, says Miller.

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"I don't see how it can get very much worse than it is now."

EMPDAC wants more money from the federal and provincial governments for the production of educational materials (film, video, 35mm slides), and more money made available to schools and libraries to buy this work.

"A million dollars put into non-theatrical film production would generate all kinds of business," Miller says. "And in film terms, that's a piddly amount."

Last year Canadian non-theatrical film amounted to only a \$25 million market. "And

yet the audience for non-theatrical film is as large as it is for theatrical film," Miller claims.

Jarvis Stoddart, executive director at EMPDAC, complains of being caught between funding bodies, with no one wanting to take responsibility for the educational market. The Department of Communications thought that "educational programming ought to be at least partly a provincial matter," he said. In addition, Telefilm has been unhelpful, and "the Ontario Film Development Corporation is just a repeat of Telefilm. They're putting all their money into features.

"I don't think there's going to be any action from them (governments) unless we can bring more political pressure to bear," said Stoddart. "You really feel like you're in a very minor position as far as the governments are concerned. But we're not stopping."

Other problem areas cited by the report:

- Not only is the supply of private sector materials drying up, but public sector educational production - represented mainly by the National Film Board of Canada - is also

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suffering. The report notes that "two decades of varying degrees of retrenchment have taken a toll on the creative staff, and reduced significantly the flow of materials into the marketplace." Miller adds, "The National Film Board has always denied any responsibility for children in Canada. They say their mandate is to explain Canada to Canadians, but as far as they're concerned, Canadians begin at 18."

- A dwindling market means a market that draws increasingly toward the centre. "Approximately 40 per cent of the annual sales for the last year were in the Toronto region, with a further 20 per cent in the rest of southern Ontario... There is a very real disparity of educational opportunity in Canada."

- Weak copyright laws (and low purchasing budgets) have meant that institutions are often copying material illegally, ordering tapes on "preview" and then making a copy for their permanent collection.

- The people in charge of school board library media collections are often poorly trained, and usually in the position for too short a time. The report puts the blame for this "decline in the level of expertise" on "decision-makers (who) now appear to regard the position of media coordinator, or audio-visual librarian, as a place to put supervisory aspirants for a couple of years of management training."

Broadcast, distribution legislation in doubt

OTTAWA - With rumours in the wind of a federal election to be called this fall, time is running out for two long-stalled pieces of Department of Communications legislation.

Neither the Broadcast Act nor the film distribution bill appear to be on cabinet's priority lists for this parliamentary session. If they are not passed before the next election, they could easily be lost in the shuffle of a new cabinet with new concerns.

The film and television industries have been putting pressure on minister Flora MacDonald to push the legislation through. According to Communications spokesperson Patricia Dumas, the broadcast legislation will be ready to be tabled in June, after having suffered several setbacks.

"Not to point fingers at anybody, but the Caplan-Sauvageau report was to be tabled in January of '86 and it was tabled in September of '86," Dumas said. Had it been tabled in January, "the legislative agenda would have made it quite possible for the bill to be passed before the next election." But the delay meant "almost a year in terms of what you can do with committee."

In addition, parliamentary reforms that gave standing committees more independence led to disagreements with the minister. And faced with questions about new forms of broadcast technology, Ms MacDonald sent the committee back to the drawing board.

The report was expected in January, Dumas said, but the resignation of Alberta MP Jim Edwards as chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Communications and Culture meant a further delay.

Even when the report is finally finished, legislation will have to wait for a policy statement from the ministry. This statement will permit "an analysis of the discrepancies or the similarities between their report and the work being done internally here," Dumas said. "It really depends on the standing committee's timetable. It will take at least two or three weeks before the policy paper can be adjusted to the standing committee report. I think you're talking about June."

The spring session of Parliament usually ends in June, but "people are talking about extending the session," according to Dumas.

In spite of high odds that the two pieces of legislation will not be passed before an election, and may not even be tabled, Dumas maintained that "everybody's moving ahead with the intention of introducing the legislation plus the policy statement quickly after the report." The delays have largely been circumstantial, she said, not the fault of Ms MacDonald.

"Everyone is attacking her for not being able to introduce the legislation, but it's much more complex than that."

Private connections for CBC all-news

TORONTO - The CBC is having exploratory meetings with ten groups of private investors about involvement in the all-news channel with a view to commence broadcasts by February 1989.

Denis Harvey, vice-president of English television at CBC, told an audience of broadcasters April 20 that the Corporation has not yet made a decision on how to involve the private sector. Although the CRTC issued the CBC a license for the all-news channel late last year, the Cabinet in an unusual move set the decision aside. Earlier this year the minister of Communications, Flora MacDonald, asked the CBC to seek private sector involvement in the news channel.

Harvey also noted that 20 per cent of the material for the news channel will come from independent suppliers. He said that the CBC has compiled an exhaustive list of all information programming produced in Canada and will be holding talks with the producers in the near future.

Academy names nine apprentices

TORONTO - Nine more young directors have been picked to take part in the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television's Director Observer Program.

Now in its second year, the Academy's program takes young filmmakers (mostly documentary and music-video makers) and puts them on the set of feature productions to work with and learn from directors. Only one of the candidates, documentarist Peter Weyman, has been matched with a production. Weyman works on the Norman Jewison-produced *The January Man*, directed by Patrick O'Connor (*A Month in the Country*, *Stars and Bars*).

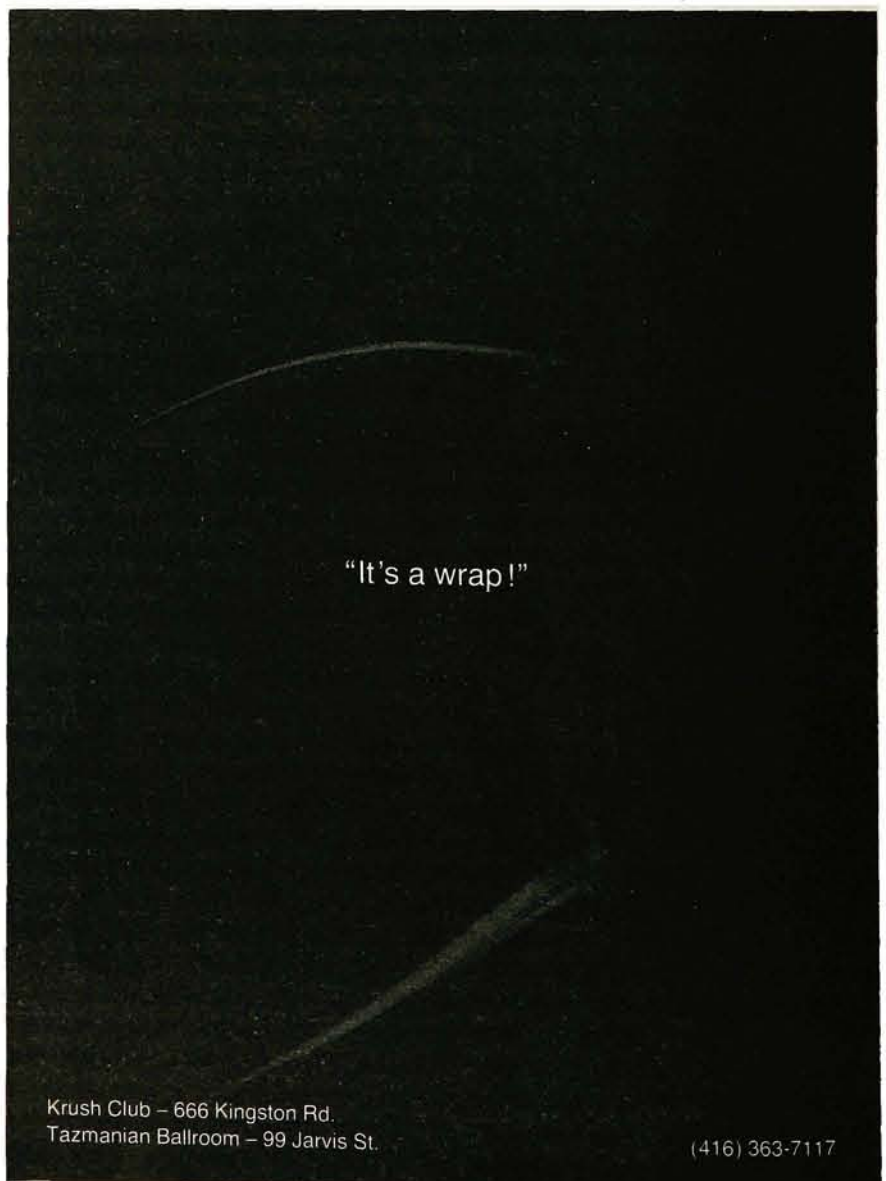
Oscar-winning filmmaker Brigitte Berman was the first of this year's apprentices to be announced. She spent time on the set of David Cronenberg's *Twins*.

The program, funded by the Ontario Film Development Corporation, is currently open

only to residents of Ontario, although the Academy hopes financial assistance will come through from other provinces. Candidates are placed on productions according to their expertise and interest (and the agreement of the production's director), and are paid for a maximum of 12 weeks.

The nine apprentices are:

Alan Gough, writer and director of industrials and music videos; Neil Grieve, director of *Perfect Strangers* (1984) starring Tom Butler and Fiona Reid; documentary filmmaker David Harel, maker of *Raoul Wallenberg: Buried Alive*; Paul Jay, director of such documentaries as *Here's to the Cowboy*, and the forthcoming *Albania*; Janis Lundman, director of the recent dramatic comedy *Close Your Eyes and Think of England*; Allan Novak, director and editor of several episodes of CBC's *It's Only Rock and Roll* and *Vid Kids, Series II*; Donna Preece, director/writer of documentaries for Global Television, CBC and TVO; music video and documentary maker Chris Terry; and Peter Weyman, whose *Against Reason: A Portrait of Jack McClelland* won the Canadian Heritage Award in Yorkton in 1986.



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ELIGIBILITY:

1. Any Canadian film (except sponsored or industrial) is eligible — animation, feature, short, documentary and experimental.
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3. Films must have been completed after September 1, 1987.
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6. Films will be presented at the Festival in 16mm and 35mm only (optical sound), and in their original language with English subtitles.
7. Deadline for receipt of entry forms is **Monday, May 23** for short films and **Monday, June 6** for feature films.
8. Deadlines for receiving prints or cassettes for preview are **Friday, May 27** for short films (under 60 minutes) and **Friday, June 10** for feature films.
9. Running time for short films is 59 minutes and under; features, anything over 60 minutes.
10. Films can only be submitted to the selection committee once. Re-submissions are not eligible.



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Cette année, les visionnements de sélection pour le programme Perspective Canada du Festival des Festivals 1988, se dérouleront à Toronto, pendant deux périodes distinctes. Les **courts-métrages et les longs-métrages doivent être soumis au plus tard les 27 mai et 10 juin** respectivement. Veuillez communiquer avec le bureau du Festival si vous désirez obtenir des formulaires d'inscription ou des renseignements supplémentaires.

ADMISSIBILITÉ :

1. Tout film canadien (sauf les films de commandite ou industriels) est admissible qu'il s'agisse d'un film d'animation, d'un long-métrage, d'un court-métrage, d'un documentaire ou d'un film expérimental.
2. Les films doivent être certifiés comme étant des productions ou des co-productions canadiennes.
3. Les films doivent avoir été terminés après le 1 septembre 1987.
4. **La préférence sera donnée aux premières canadiennes.**
5. Pour les visionnements de sélection, les films peuvent être soumis en 16mm, 35mm, ou en bande vidéo de 3/4 po ou 1/2 po.
6. Les films seront présentés au Festival en 16mm et en 35mm (son optique) en version originale avec sous-titres anglais.
7. La date limite pour la réception des formulaires d'inscription est le **lundi 23 mai** pour les courts-métrages et le **lundi 6 juin** pour les longs-métrages.
8. La date limite pour la réception des copies ou des cassettes destinées aux visionnements de sélection est le **vendredi 27 mai pour les courts-métrages (moins de 60 minutes) et le vendredi 10 juin** pour les longs-métrages.
9. Sont considérés comme des courts-métrages les films de 59 minutes et moins et comme des longs-métrages, les films de plus de 60 minutes.
10. Les films peuvent être soumis une fois seulement au comité de sélection. Les films ayant déjà fait l'objet d'un rejet ne peuvent être soumis une deuxième fois.



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To begin, a warm thank-you to everyone who took the time to comment on the B. C. special issue, No. 151. Feedback is always welcome, especially when it comes with suggestions of how to do things better. And, to clear up some confusion about Sarah Walker and Andrea Burchill, the two young actresses from *Housekeeping* who graced our cover; Sarah is actually the taller girl in the white shirt, Andrea is on the left. Sorry for the vague identification.

As you may recall Sarah and Andrea are alumni of the Vancouver Youth Theatre (which also supplied Zachary Ansley to Anne Wheeler's *Cowboys Don't Cry*). VYT premieres its latest stage production "Will the Real Canadian...?" at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre May 11-14. If you're looking for fresh young actors, drop by. But don't dawdle; the show heads off to Australia this summer and there's no shortage of directors down under who know talent when they see it.

- Some awards worth noting:

Anna French is the first Canadian to win the prestigious Bish medal for unusual achievement in the face of adversity. Ten years ago she was volunteering with the archeology crew which discovered the lost city of Acia in the Panamanian jungle. She got involved with an ABC-TV crew and discovered filmmaking. Since then, she's made the documentary on Rick Hansen's Man in Motion tour, also a volunteer project. Now she's working on a feature film for children aimed at the Christmas market.

Robert Brandreth-Gibbs of Yaletown Productions has won the Silver Birch Award from the International Television Association-Canada. The spot was a humorous explanation of an antique car insurance scheme offered by the B. C. Automobile Association. It's now in the running at the ITVA international competition in Las Vegas.

- The Pacific Northwest Multi-Image Festival is looking for submissions for this year's event, June 1-4 in Vancouver. Entries are open to one and all; there will be no pre-screenings and you don't even have to provide a preview video. In fact, the only rule seems to be a maximum length of 20 minutes. Contact the Association for Multi-Image at (604) 879-1999 or Howard Shaw at 681-4391.

- The Vancouver Film Festival is a few months away (Sept. 30 - Oct. 15) but there's an early event on May 7 at the venerable Orpheum Theatre. The VIFF and the Orpheum Heritage Project are presenting the first film ever to win the Best Picture Academy Award, *Wings*, (1928). It's "a tale of love and loss set against the backdrop of World War I... renowned as one of the greatest aviation films ever made with air combat sequences so dramatic that *Star Wars* director George Lucas used them as the model for his aerial dogfight sequences."

If that's not exciting enough, the star, Charles 'Buddy' Rogers is, at the age of 83, coming to Vancouver to present the film. Also popular theatrical organist Gaylord Carter will be on hand to re-create his original score. Tickets between \$12-\$15.

- Pay-TV's Superchannel is reported to be investing in B. C. filmmaking. Polaris Entertainment is producing three supernatural half-hour dramas written by Lindsay Bourne and Gregory Marquette. Lighthouse Films is shooting a feature-length futuristic action/adventure called *City Of Dark* by Bruno Pacheco.

Superchannel is also putting some money into three projects-in-the-works: Robert Frederick Productions' made-for-TV *Shadow in the Works* (based on the story of filmmaker Edward Curtis), Sandy Wilson's feature *Florence* and Margaret Steley's *The Snow Queen*.

- Jon Stoddart Productions' *A Different Dance*, the first episode in the CBC anthology series, *Family Pictures*, began shooting in late April. This story of generation-gap problems specific to immigrant families will be broadcast next January.

The project has received support and funding from the Secretary of State for Multiculturalism, Telefilm, B. C. Film and The CBC.

- West Coast writer / producer Robert Popoff is trying to finance a feature called *Pacific Bound*, and has run into a few problems along the way. He received some money from Telefilm for development and will be working with Peter Colley on a rewrite of the script.

Popoff is upset, like many Canadian filmmakers, about recent tax changes regarding investment in Canadian films. He wrote to finance minister Michael Wilson, who replied that he felt the changes bring fairness to the tax system and that he didn't agree with Popoff's suggestion that the cut in tax breaks might kill the industry here. Wilson did say he had been discussing ways of helping filmmakers with other cabinet ministers.

In the meantime, Popoff hasn't given up on his feature, which tells the story of a Saskatoon law student who quits school and heads for the coast on his Harley to buy a charter boat with money from an inheritance.

- After four years of study, a new crop of film and video students are about to emerge from the Emily Carr College of Art and Design. As is the custom, their work will be screened as part of the College's annual Grad Show. The gala opening is May 7 but the show, and the films / videos, will continue through May. Phone 687-2345 local 256 for the schedule.

Unions multiply as Vancouver ACFC opens

VANCOUVER - The Association of Canadian Film Craftspeople (ACFC) is moving West. The Toronto-based union opened offices in Vancouver on April 11 with about 80 members signed up (as of presstime). That number equals ACFC membership in Winnipeg but is far short of the 500 Toronto technicians, gaffers, designers, cameramen and other behind-the-camera crew.

Organizer Kevin Brown says the need for a new, Canadian union local arose after an ever increasing number of industry workers grew frustrated with IATSE Local #891. He says the feeling was that IATSE members "don't like making movies, they like making money" and are overly protective of their positions. He cites his own attempts to get an IATSE card as a set dresser.

"All I ever wanted was a chance and they wouldn't give me one."

He says that, although IATSE has about 300 members in B. C. (and has recently carded another 200), there is an ongoing problem of under-representation. He tells stories of newcomers with extensive and impressive out-of-province credits being denied entry to IATSE. The ACFC, he says, will take on anyone with a track record and will also help people with related experience break into the industry.

George Chapman, business agent for IATSE Local #891, says the formation of an ACFC local in Vancouver is "a sign of the times."

"We have doubled in size over the last two years," Chapman says, "by June 1 we will have over 500 members and will probably pick up another 150 in the following nine months. Everything (in B. C.) has been operating at an accelerated rate.

"We're already looking at a shrinking pie; network license fees are going down and the Canadian dollar is going up which is affecting major pictures. For every percentage point (the dollar rises) American producers lose \$75,000 in savings. Everyone knows it's precarious right now."

He's worried that the ACFC membership might find themselves with no work if the bubble bursts.

Brown says ACFC does not want a war with IATSE. "In fact, our rates will probably be about 50 cents an hour higher. We want to demonstrate that we're the A-team, the best option. Where we'll offer savings to producers is in having no minimum crewing requirements and no seniority which always results in a discontinuity of effort."

Chapman responds, "If our systems don't

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work, local members have the ability to change the rules. We don't have minimum crewing. In fact, I have a picture now which is organized to the point of having a crew the size of a movie-of-the-week."

ACFC's head office is providing financial backing to establish the new local and has assured Brown that "they have longstanding relationships with producers who are interested in working in B. C." He reports a positive reaction from two unidentified Canadian producers with projects in the wings, New World Pictures and Cannell, the TV production company that accounts for a large portion of

West Coast work.

Chapman allows that "in general, competition is healthy" but adds, "It's unfortunate that this should occur almost after the fact. If we had had more alternatives available last year and the year before we may have been able to serve the pictures that left the province. Our competition is not in Canada, it's Florida, Texas, Louisiana, those places."

Vancouver Island should also benefit from an ACFC local, according to Brown (who was involved in the establishment of the Victoria Film Commission). He says the fact that Victoria is not within IATSE's 25-mile studio zone has

made it difficult to sell producers on shooting there, despite its compact size and varied locations. Inevitably some crew members must travel from the Lower Mainland; he says IATSE's per diem rates and regulations make such shoots too expensive. Brown says ACFC "won't need expensive hotels. We'll look for minimal rates for Vancouver members who travel to fill out a crew."

ACFC is well aware of the need to support indigenous B. C. filmmaking; Brown indicates

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NEWS

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the union will be "extremely flexible" when negotiating with home-grown productions. "We are a Canadian union and are interested in seeing that something is left behind (if the American producers leave)."

If innovation provides an edge, then the ACFC has one idea which should be attractive to anyone working on a set, or at least anyone with a child. The membership is considering operating an all-industry daycare centre on its shoots with the service open to one and all - even IATSE members.

At the same time, the National Association of Broadcast Employees (NABET) is also organizing in B.C. About 125 people attended a meeting in April to "organize non-affiliated people in all film and video crafts." Toronto Local 700 agent Linda Gardon told *The Vancouver Sun*, "We're looking for people in the film documentary and commercials field. We're also interested in the feature film and TV-series area but that may take a little more time."

ACFC Vancouver can be contacted at Suite C-302, The Marine Building, 355 Burrard Street, Vancouver, V6C 2G8. The phone number is (604) 683-2232.

The percentage is the point in negotiations

MONTREAL - Quebec producers are dissatisfied and wish to renegotiate a clause in the collective agreement of the Syndicat des techniciennes et des techniciens du cinéma du Québec (STCQ) that limits to 15 per cent the number of non-union members who can work on a production.

However, the 700-member technicians union says it will not renegotiate the clause next fall. "No," says STCQ board member Pierre Blondin. "We do make exceptions to the rule and that should be good enough for them. When they exceed the 15 per cent it is usually because they want to pay less."

This volatile issue is a continuous source of tension between producers and the union. Rock Demers, president of the Association des producteurs de film et de vidéo du Québec (APFVQ) and one of the signatories of the collective agreement, says the problem of how to mount a production without exceeding the 15 per cent limit or quota of non-members becomes much more acute during the summer months when the STCQ members are busily employed on various productions.

"Each time we can respect the quota we do. But there are certain occasions where it is

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Film/Video Canadiana 1985-1986, the newest edition of Canada's national filmography is now available.

Film/Video Canadiana 1985-1986 is a detailed guide to more than 2,500 French and English films and videos produced in 1985 and 1986. It also includes a directory of over 3,500 Canadian producers and distributors.

The publication is the result of a cooperative project undertaken by the National Archives of Canada (Moving Image and Sound Archives Division), the National Library of Canada, the Cinéma-mathèque québécoise and the NFB. The aim of this partnership is to promote the distribution of Canadian films and videos both at home and abroad and to create a permanent record of Canadian filmmaking.

Film/Video Canadiana 1985-1986 may be ordered through the Customer Services Division of the National Film Board (price: \$35.00 in Canada; \$40.00 U.S. and elsewhere).

For further information, contact Jane Devine at (514) 283-9247.

NEW FOR THE CLASSROOM

Three new packages for the classroom have just been released

by the NFB. **Images of a Peaceful Planet**, a cassette with seven top NFB titles including the Oscar-winning **If You Love This Planet** and **Neighbours**, is directed at peace study groups and the classroom. This powerful cassette was first introduced at the Peace Institute held as a part of the Quebec Teachers' Convention in Montreal last November and will be featured at a Peace Day for Toronto educators this May and at the International Institute for Peace Education at the University of Alberta in Edmonton in July. **Film for a Peaceful Planet**, a resource guide which accompanies the video, is available free of charge.

Focus on Canada, a specialized resource handbook for secondary level Social Studies teachers, is also available. This book, which provides film-use suggestions for 300 NFB films, was researched and prepared by a group of eight teachers from across Canada.

Images and Meaning, a compilation cassette and accompanying film study notes featuring nine NFB titles, is designed to spark discussion and learning in media literacy and communications arts courses.

Information on all items is available by writing to: Education Marketing, D-5, National Film Board of Canada, P.O. Box

6100, Station A, Montreal, Quebec, H3C 3H5.

NFB AT MIP-TV

The National Film Board will again participate at MIP-TV, the world's largest TV sales marketplace. The Board will be offering TV buyers over 150 films, most produced within the last two years. Last year, a large percentage of the NFB's international sales revenues were directly related to its MIP presence. Among this year's potentially big sellers are: **To a Safer Place**, the story of an incest survivor; **Shoot and Cry**, an exploration of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; **Sonia**, a drama about a victim of Alzheimer's disease and **Give Me Your Answer True**, a biography of Canadian actor Donald Sutherland.

ALSO ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE

Italy has replaced France as the NFB's top European client and is now second only to the United States. A major sale to Greek television, involving films on women's studies, is a breakthrough in this Eastern market. A sale to Korean broadcasting which, among other titles, includes the highly acclaimed series **Daughters of the Country**, is the biggest NFB sale ever to that country.

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impossible to respect it despite our good intentions," says Demers.

Marie José Raymond, co-producer of *Mills of Power*, is currently in arbitration with the STCQ over union grievances that include a breach of the 15 per cent quota. Raymond shares Demers' concern that there are not enough STCQ members to hire at peak production times. This problem, she says, is compounded by the fact that the union is slow to enroll new members.

"It is unrealistic," says Raymond. "There is a limited number of people in the union. When we have a glut of U.S. films or many films shooting in Quebec at the same time, we simply

don't have the option of taking STCQ members."

Both producers say that the most competent technicians are not always union members and that the producers should have the choice, especially during peak times, to hire on the basis of competence and compatibility with the rest of the crew.

Explains Demers, "Sometimes you have people available who are not considered very good technicians, so what do you do? This is a delicate question. Sometimes the technician may be very good but for some reason the crew does not want to work with him. If we had more

people to choose from we would be able to put together a whole crew that would work together, but some of them and some of us are very difficult people."

Blondin doesn't buy either argument about numbers of available crew or competence. "Our collective agreement is clear," he says. They can hire outside of the union if they can demonstrate that STCQ members are not available. There is also a procedure for dismissing a member for incompetence."

Bill Wiggins, associate producer with Claude

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Héroux Productions on the successful ongoing television series *He Shoots, He Scores*, says large-scale productions (40 crew members) have a more difficult time with the 15 per cent quota. The STCQ had laid grievances twice on the 15 per cent quota against *He Shoots, He Scores*.

With the exception of a core group of STCQ members who have worked on numerous projects with Claude Héroux, Wiggins says there is a constant need to improve the quality of work and, at the same time, balance the budget. The problem, he says, exists where the union does not have many members trained in high-key positions. Wiggins says he is often unable to hire enthusiastic production assistants for lesser wages (than union rates) because he has already hired non-members to more key positions.

"If a 40-member crew can use only six non-members in any post, and if four non-members are holding positions that require a lot of experience, this leaves me with the option of hiring only two production assistants," says Wiggins. He adds, "I don't think the enthusiasm of a PA who has been a PA for the last four years is the same as that of a new guy who has been involved in a film for the first time and who is going to work for a minimal wage just to get in."

Again Blondin denies that there is an inadequate number of key people - assistant directors, art directors, directors of photography, camera assistants. He says that an apprenticeship training program is an STCQ priority but another issue that the technicians and the producers cannot come to terms with.

"We rarely have a problem with key persons," says Blondin.

Wiggins, like Demers, insists that the 15 per cent limit should be raised to 20 per cent.

The STCQ allows a 25 per cent limit for production shot 80 km outside of Montreal.

CBC-BC gets development head

VANCOUVER - The CBC English TV network has appointed veteran drama producer Philip Keatley to head up a Program Development Office in Vancouver. CBC vice-president Ivan Fecan says the office is responsible for talent and program development across western Canada.

The establishment of the office, along with another to be announced for the eastern provinces, "will provide a greater opportunity for Canadian talent, from coast to coast, to be

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reflected on the network", says Fecan.

Keatley will be working with two senior CBC-TV executives, Nada Harcourt (drama series) and John Kennedy (movies and mini-series). He says his new job will give him more power to negotiate for national airings of programs produced in B. C., Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

Keatley was producer of the innovative, well-remembered '60s series *Cariboo Country* as well as the perennial *Beachcombers*. As of his appointment CBC-British Columbia was only contributing two regular series to the national CBC schedule, *The Beachcombers* and *Danger Bay*.

The money comes together for big three

TORONTO - Three financial powerhouses of the film industry - Stephen Roth, Frank Jacobs and David Perlmutter - have joined forces to create a new production financing company, Cinexus.

Roth told *Cinema Canada* that Cinexus is essentially a banking operation or mini-studio which will invest in a wide range of film and

television projects in exchange for world distribution rights. He added that because Cinexus is backed by private institutional capital and is not project-dependent, the company will be unaffected by the reduction in the capital cost allowance. He said that because of the extensive capitalization Cinexus will not have to depend on international pre-sales. He wouldn't say how many projects the company will be involved in but noted that financing is not a problem. "If there were 30 films out there, we could handle it," he said. Projects currently in development include an adaptation of Sylvia Fraser's *In My Father's House*.

Canadian programming to protect broadcasters

TORONTO—Private broadcasters are looking to original Canadian programming to protect the future of Canadian broadcasting in an increasingly hostile broadcasting environment. At a *Financial Post* conference April 20 entitled "Broadcasting: Putting a Pricetag on Open Skies," senior broadcast executives from across Canada addressed a list of ongoing threats to Canadian broadcasting.

These included competition from new specialty services; audience and market fragmentation; the introduction of new American pay channels; the continuing negative impact of the VCR; and on the horizon, the entry of distant television signals to local Canadian markets and the potential of home satellite dishes bypassing the regulatory framework.

Izzy Asper, chairman of Global Television and

of Canwest, which has interests in independent stations in Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon and Vancouver, sees a future of continued uncertainty in which profit margins will shrink and the market value of television stations will decline.

Asper called on the CRTC to streamline its license renewal process, introducing automatic renewal of licences and putting a five-year moratorium on the introduction of new specialty services.

Raymond Peters, chairman of BCTV, while agreeing with Asper's analysis, sees the ongoing change in broadcasting providing opportunities for Canadian broadcasters. He said, "One of the best opportunities is Canadian programming." He added that "Canadian programming is what makes us different from our foreign competition. Canadian programming is what our local audiences particularly respond to. Canadian programming is what is going to ensure that our television services continue to dominate our local markets." He noted that six of BCTV's top 10 shows are Canadian and that the audience for Canadian programming is growing each year.

Mount Royal copes with low ratings, loses partners

TORONTO—CTV's lavish nighttime mini-series *Mount Royal* has suffered its share of slings and arrows since premiering in January, but early stumbles are the fate of any new Canadian series, according to network executive Arthur Weinthal.

Weinthal, in charge of entertainment programming at CTV, says that all *Mount Royal* needs is time. "We started off reasonably well and we slipped off our feet a little bit, and I think now we're starting to climb back up.

Whether Alliance and the network will be awarded the time is questionable. Recent news that Radio-Canada will not renew its interest in the series and low ratings may combine to terminate the series before it can establish itself.

The Nielsen ratings report only 291,000

spectators for the March 22 episode; hardly enough to justify the series' \$16 million budget.

The show was interrupted after only four episodes by the Calgary Olympics, but Weinthal said that did not have a great effect on ratings. CTV is not releasing ratings figures. "Critically it's done well. André Bureau from the CBC called me and said it was a very good show... The press generally has been very supportive of the show."

There has, in fact, been a wide range of media coverage of the series. Some critics have questioned the timing of putting on a big-budget Canadian nighttime serial now, after audiences have been saturated with American versions.


"Canadian shows require more patience to find an audience," says Weinthal. "It's like Mr. Campeau - you're in for a dime, you're in for a dollar."

(Robert Campeau, chairman of Campeau Corporation, recently spent more than \$6 billion taking over the American company, Federated Department Stores Inc.)


"There's no such thing as a Canadian series that starts off well from day one. We really need

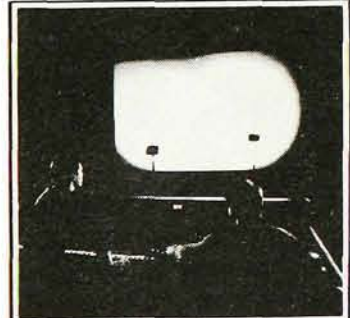
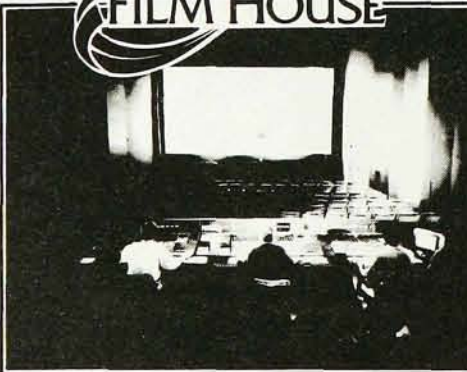
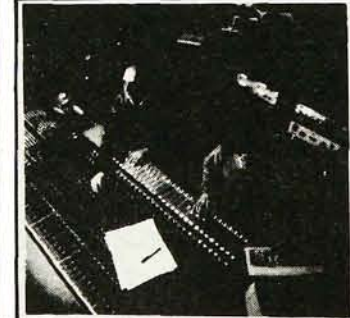
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time to build shows in this country. The first year of (CTV and CBS drama series) *Night Heat* was very slow - I could go through a whole litany of shows that proved to be successful over three, four or five years but the first year, you kind of have to hang on with them and work with them. We've been fiddling with the show quite a bit, but structurally, in terms of the characters and the cast, I think we have a good group.

"The production of course is complicated by the fact that we have two production units, one here and one in Paris. . . Even though we're only shooting 20 per cent of the show in France, it still requires a full complement of people.

"The work that's been done on the program since it premiered will, in time, draw an audience," Weinthal continues.

"We started off doing more story material than the hour could comfortably swallow, or the audience could comfortably swallow in an hour. We were doing four stories on our shows in the first few shows, and while they were good and so on, finally you're better off to have one story and two satellite stories rather than four stories.

"The latter shows are better than some of the earlier shows. The problem that you have in television programming is to get an audience to return when maybe they've seen an episode and didn't particularly like it. You hope that they'll come back and try you again in three to five weeks. Inevitably, word-of-mouth is what shows live on more than anything else."

Atlantis bows out of all-Canadian production...

EDMONTON - Director Anne Wheeler has been living up to her name recently, with one film set to be released this month and another ready to shoot this summer.

Wheeler has just returned from India, where she was completing the final location scouting for *Bye Bye Blues*, set to start filming in Alberta and India in June.

Bye Bye Blues was to have been produced by Atlantis Films (in association with Wheeler/Hendren Enterprises), but the maker of *Loyalties* chose to go with Edmonton-based broadcaster Allarcom when it looked like Atlantis wouldn't be able to put together all-Canadian funding for the \$4 million film. Allarcom had expressed interest in the project, on the condition that it executive-produce the film. At that point, Atlantis bowed out.

"It was a very friendly agreement," says Atlantis spokesperson Jeremy Katz. "We had lots of productions on our plate to do and we

wanted Anne to get the picture done." The relatively large budget is due to the period nature of the film. It's a musical set during and after World War II, with some filming to be done in India.

Atlantis opens *Cowboys Don't Cry*, which Wheeler wrote and directed, across Canada this month and has sold exclusive broadcast rights for the film to America's Disney channel.

... Joins in six-way deal

TORONTO - A complex co-production deal involving at least six participants will result in a three-hour mini-series that takes a satirical look at TV evangelists.

American company Home Box Office is "presenting" *Sister Ruth*, which sees a rock singer enlisted by tele-evangelists to pump up the ratings and the donations. Atlantis Films Ltd., in association with Orion Television, is coproducing the miniseries with Greif-Dore Productions. *Sister Ruth* will be presented in Canada by First Choice, Global Television and Première Choix: TVEC Inc., and distributed by Orion TV and Alliance Releasing.

British director Lindsay Anderson, known in the past for his scathing satires (*Britannia Hospital*, *O Lucky Man*) and more recently for a gentler touch (*The Whales of August*) will direct.

Stan Daniels, writer/producer of the *Mary Tyler Moore Show*, wrote the script, which will star Ellen Greene (*Little Shop of Horrors*), Richard Thomas (*The Waltons*) and James Whitmore. Described as "a comedy with music," the series will begin a six-week shoot in mid-June. *Sister Ruth* is set to be released in early 1989.

The exact breakdown of the three hours is yet to be decided. "It'll either be three ones or two-one-and-a-halfes, or some variation on that," said Atlantis spokesperson Jeremy Katz.

Cineplex and Alliance strike deal

TORONTO - Vertical integration won another victory last month when Alliance Entertainment Corporation announced that it had struck a "financing arrangement" with Cineplex Odeon that would see the exhibitor invest in Alliance through a combination of debt and preferred shares.

Noting the "natural and symbiotic relationship" between the two companies, Alliance co-chairman Denis Héroux heralded the arrangement, which will cause Alliance to use

Cineplex's Film House post-production facilities and Alliance Releasing to exhibit its films in Cineplex theatres.

Neither Alliance nor Cineplex is releasing figures about the amount Cineplex has invested, but sources at the Ministry of Consumer and Corporate Affairs believes the amount is about 20 per cent of Alliance's net worth. The new relationship is likely to solidify the domination of Cineplex in central Canadian exhibition and of Alliance in production and distribution.

It has yet to be decided whether the arrangement contravenes government rules on fair competition. According to the Competition Act, any merger (defined in part as "control over, or significant interest in... a competitor or supplier") must not be "likely to prevent or lessen competition substantially."

Don Partridge, senior commerce officer at the Ministry of Consumer and Corporate Affairs would say only that "we're aware of the situation, but beyond that we can't really comment."

Cineplex and Alliance have begun collaboration on *Interview*, a remake of the French film noir *Garde à Vue*.

Rocking 'em with kiddie tales again

MONTREAL - Rock Demers' *The Tadpole And The Whale*, the sixth film of the *Tales For All* series of family-oriented films, has taken four of five top five prizes at the sixth International Festival of Films for Young People in Laon, France, March 21 to 31.

Directed by Jean-Claude Lord, starring Fanny Lauzier and produced by Demers, the film was chosen by every jury at the festival from close to 80 feature films, 17 of which were in official competition.

The Tadpole will be launched this summer by Cinema Plus.

Other films which have won prizes at Laon in the *Tales For All* series, produced by les Productions la Fête, are *The Dog Who Stopped The War*, *The Peanut Butter Solution*, *Bach and Broccoli* and *The Young Magician*.

A COMPETITION AND SHOWCASE FOR ANIMATION

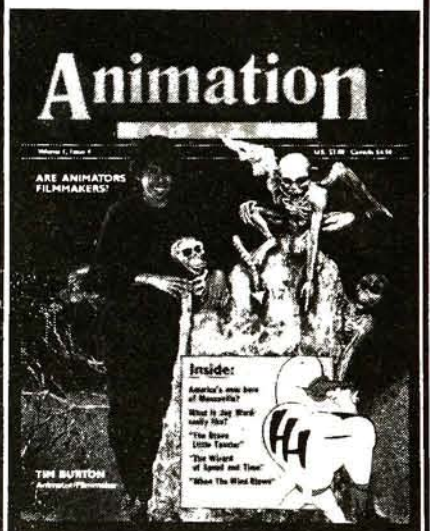


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Sponsored film vital

In Alberta, sponsored film is a lifeline. The province's producers aggressively court sponsors with their film ideas. Though the past five years have been difficult, the industry seems to have made it through this dry spell.

A recent survey of the province by the Alberta Motion Picture Industry Association (AMPIA) shows 65% of the provincial industry depends on sponsored film for its bread and butter.

Julian Smithers, AMPIA board member, is compiling the survey results from over 80 responses. "We immediately noticed the prime source of income for over half our members was from sponsored film," he says. AMPIA president Allan Stein agrees. "It's definitely an important cornerstone in regional production."

If sponsored film is so vital, producers have two options: either go after sponsored film for all it's worth, or diversify. The Alberta government has been big on diversification even before the bottom fell off the oil barrel. In film and video too, the government has tried to get companies to diversify. It set up the Alberta Motion Picture Development Corporation (AMPDC) to help develop film for commercial broadcasting and theatrical release, since it saw this as a weak area. Sponsored film, like experimental and documentary, is not eligible for guaranteed loans from AMPDC. In 1980 these were strong areas.

Now the tables have turned. Almost immediately following the 1981 start of AMPDC, the recession hit Alberta and funds for government sponsored film dried up, while feature film still had a \$3-million pool of funds to play in. AMPIA president Stein says, "I think government bureaucrats tried first to cut money in programs that don't obviously put people out of work. A lot of people believe that film is frivolous, a luxury. Before 1982, government departments like Agriculture and Manpower were doing at least one significant film per year."

Fortunately, the economic drought is over. "Business was up 40% last year," says Smithers. It's time to go after sponsored film again, both from the private sector and from government. Only one in five producers received any work from the Alberta government last year. The amount of federal dollars trickling to Alberta is improving, says Stein. "We're doing better on federally sponsored film, but the increase is disproportionate." He says there is more work available from both the provincial and the federal government, but it's a question of lobbying.

That is exactly what's been going on. Individually, producers court whatever people they need to; as a group they go after the provincial government. In short, they promote themselves when and where they can. Take, for example, this year's jury for the AMPIA Awards. Dan Burke manages the federal Sponsor Program Group at the Film and Video Centre, Isme Bennie presides over Paragon International in Toronto, and Frank Irvine edits for Petra Films in Vancouver. The three were invited (and paid) to judge this year's AMPIA awards. Stein explains that AMPIA members had the benefit of a knowledgeable jury. At the same time, people from around the country got to see what Alberta filmmakers are making. That's smart. It advertises Alberta products to a selected target audience within the industry.

This year the judges all attended the 'Sponsored Showcase' to watch an afternoon of sponsored film. This is a new idea in self-promotion for Alberta, giving local producers a chance to show off their wares, and clients a chance to show off to each other.

Attendance was poor—a combination of circumstances—but the Sponsored Showcase had a good trial run. There were wrinkles to be ironed out anyway. For example, every single film clip started at the wrong speed, some of the clips were too long and there was mild disagreement over who to invite.

"The target clientele was precisely those government communications people who decided that film is a luxury, to remind them how effective film and video can be," says Stein. Smithers says the next Sponsored Showcase should include the private sector. "I want to hold some open discussions on tendering, sponsoring and the way proposals are handled to familiarize new clients with the industry."

The industry itself is doing what it can to promote itself. Fortunately it also gets active help from the Alberta government. AMPDC will get another \$7-million in loan money to play with if amendments to the Motion Picture Development Act are passed this summer. Also, the province appoints people who understand the industry to positions that count.

Michele Spak, director of Audio Visual and Exhibition Service for the Alberta Public Service Bureau, has managed to reduce the amount of red tape which typically surrounds government. Smithers says, "Spak personally takes an interest. She has made a real, genuine effort to smooth out procedures."

The government itself is equally flattering about the local industry. As the economy continues to improve, the government too will increase its share of film and video production. "We rely heavily on the private sector," says Dick Steiner, executive director for Communication Services.

Actually, the Public Service Bureau does no in-house production at all. This Conservative government doesn't just want the private sector to grow, it wants it to bloom.

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Hepburn on jungle adventures

In her delightfully informal memoir, *The Making of "The African Queen"*, Katharine Hepburn narrates her experiences during the 1951 shooting in the former Belgian Congo of John Huston's classic movie. Hepburn gives us incisive sketches of Huston, co-star Humphrey Bogart (with wife Lauren Bacall along for the ride) and producer Sam Spiegel, all struggling valiantly to surmount the rigors of the climate, the primitive accommodations, not to mention the hazards of production in an inhospitable jungle (*Knopf, NYC, \$15.95*).

A perceptive study of contrasting personalities, *Hitchcock and Selznick* by Leonard J. Leff traces the confrontational course of their collaboration on *Rebecca*, *Spellbound*, *Notorious* and *The Paradine Case*. Differences in temperament and aesthetic outlook caused repeated clashes that, paradoxically, often benefited the final product. (*Weidenfeld & Nicolson, NYC, \$22.50*).

Joseph Zsuffa's outstanding biography, *Bela Balasz*, chronicles the embattled life of the Hungarian-born philosopher, critic, screenwriter and director. His lasting contribution, a seminal theory of film aesthetics formulated in the early 1920s and embraced by leading European filmmakers of the day, was the first to view cinema as an autonomous art from with its own special means of expression. (*University of California Press, Berkeley, \$50*).

The shifting current in American film form from the turbulent '70s to the conservative '80s are knowledgeably interpreted in Robin Wood's *Hollywood from Vietnam to Reagan*. In well-documented examples, Wood identifies directors (De Palma, Friedkin, Lucas, Cimino) and films (*Heaven's Gate*, *Crusing*, *Blade Runner*) that were among the trend-setters in this evolution. (*Columbia University Press, NYC, \$12.50*).

Denis Gifford's sweeping survey, *British Animated Film 1895-1985*, logs close to 1,300 entries, from one-minute wartime propaganda cartoons to full-length features. Complete production data, plot summaries and review excerpts complete this specialized reference work. (*McFarland, Jefferson, NC, \$29.95*).

An extensive survey by Richard C. and Marie Helt, *West German Cinema Since 1945*, carries full data on over 3,300 features, with cross-indexing of directors and performers, biographies of leading personalities, and English-language titles of all listed films. This substantial reference work also includes a brief history of the German film industry as well as interviews with filmmakers Mieke and Eichinger. (*Scarecrow, Metuchen, NJ, \$52.50*).

Prof. Ira Konigsberg compiles a comprehensive and instructive lexicon of current terms and phrases in *The Complete Film Dictionary*. It covers, in over 3,500 entries, the art, technology and industry of the film with definitions both succinct and thorough, supplemented by drawings and photographs. Up-to-date, well-organized and literate, this is a particularly valuable reference work. (*NAL, NYC, \$24.95*).

Two decades of television entertainment are chronicled in Alvin H. Marill's thoroughgoing volume, *Movies Made for Television*, listing telefeatures and miniseries from 1964 through 1986. It includes over 2,000 programs with complete cast and credits, plot summaries, filmographies of performers, directors and writers, and a complete cross-index. (*NY Zoetrope, NYC, \$19.95 / 39.95*).

Look further for funding, says liaison

MONTREAL - Peter Landecker, a former film development director in Los Angeles with Embassy Pictures and Sascha/Schnieder (*Hill Street Blues*) says Canadians are not looking far and wide enough for ways to finance films.

"Today the market is worldwide," says Landecker, hired by Telescene Productions Inc. as a liaison with the Los Angeles-based U.S. film industry.

"Canadian filmmakers should consider themselves world-class filmmakers and know that their market is no longer defined by borders. There are so many people out there who are hungry for product and scripts."

Landecker asserts that various U.S. financing options await Canadian filmmakers who are willing to produce what the U.S. market (the world market) is asking for, and not necessarily at the expense of Canadian cultural content.

"As an American, I am all for Canadian filmmakers preserving Canadian culture and making Canadian-themed films. But for a film to reach a worldwide audience it's got to have a certain excitement and hit on universal themes. It has got to touch emotions. It can't be too regional, and history lessons just won't cut it."

"But I do think that cultural and commercial viability can be joined," says Landecker, adding that there should be no shame in producing more commercial films like *Porkys* and *Meatballs* along with more culturally-oriented films like *The Grey Fox*.

"A healthy industry should have all genres of film. The commercial features will support the art films that won't get box office," says Landecker.

Platoon, he says, is a good example of a successful U.S. film that combines a social

statement with entertainment value - an element that he says is often lacking in Canadian films which have a reputation in the U.S. as being "dry, distant and slowpaced."

"I am not at all suggesting that Canadian films should attempt to be U.S. films and I am not talking about just giving people what they want. Rather I am talking about presenting what you want to present in a way that people are impelled to see it."

Landecker says he has no reservations about comparing the business of producing and distributing film in the U.S. to that of selling pantyhose.

"U.S. producers look at their films strictly as a business - as product to be sold like pantyhose. This is a refreshing view and very professional. It removes a certain haziness about how people relate to each other (on the film) and rarely is there any second thought given to what it will do for the social conditions of the world."

Observations of the Canadian film industry have led Landecker to question the merits of waiting on provincial and federal government funding. This, he says, is a disincentive for filmmakers who would otherwise learn to look outward at world markets for financial support.

"I am surprised to see everyone here waiting to get government support before making a film. This mindset is limiting. Government support should be considered a bonus," says Landecker.

Co-ventures and line-producing are two of the more common arrangements between Canadians and Americans, and one need only look at the number of small and mid-size distributors in the U.S. to see where opportunity lies, he continued.

"There are over 200 film distributors in L.A. alone," he says. "TV deals and video sales are becoming as lucrative as theatrical deals and there are many projects (low-budget horror, teen comedies) that are making money without going theatrical."



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Hot Shots establishes stock footage library

VANCOUVER - Hot Shots, a Vancouver commercial production company, has set up a stock shot library of British Columbia footage.

More than 70,000 feet of 35mm film - including shots of scenery, sports, industry, and city shots in Vancouver and Victoria - has already been catalogued and is available.

"We're limiting ourselves to the best of the best," says Sandee Huberman, stock librarian and production co-ordinator at Hot Shots, explaining that the footage is almost exclusively 35mm. She said that the library will only deal with high-quality product.

The initial footage, which arrived last December, was from the Bob Rogers' film, *Our British Columbia*. This was a short film shown in Tri-Max at Expo 86, for which Rogers shot about

40 hours of film. The library has since acquired work by Vancouver cinematographer Gordon Grant whose footage includes a great deal of aerial shots.

"Basically, we represent a number of different cinematographers and producers, whose work we lease," Huberman says. "We don't own the footage." All the material is available in Beta, VHS and three-quarter-inch formats. The service is designed to fit the needs of advertising agencies, production houses, television, and even live theatre, Huberman claims.

In the first three months of operation, most of the library's dealings have been with Canadian companies, but Hot Shots has plans to market the library across North America.

A gathering of the tribes for festival

PINCHER CREEK - Dances and pow-wows of the Blackfoot Confederacy will be featured as well as aboriginal films at the second annual Festival of Aboriginal Motion Pictures, Sept. 21-25 in Pincher Creek, Alberta.

Last year's festival, organized by the Pincher Creek Film Society, brought in more than 140 films and videos from 15 different countries. About 230 delegates travelled from as far away as New Zealand, Australia and Sweden. Films and workshops drew more than 400 people.

Quebec studies health of indy theatres

MONTREAL - The Quebec government has appointed a five-member committee to study the state of independent theatres in Quebec.

Cultural Affairs Minister Lise Bacon said the committee will examine the use of the theatres in terms of audience, the general state of repair and the question of independent theatres versus home video rentals.

The study is a direct response to a request by the Quebec Association of Theatre Owners. It is also in keeping with ongoing consultations, prior to the adoption of Bill 59 (dealing with, among other things, French-dubbed versions of

English-language films) expected later this summer.

Paul Gendron, president of the Victoriaville-based theatre chain Cinevic, will head the committee. Other members are theatre owners Marcel Venne and Renauld Thériault, distributor Pierre Latour and Jean Colbert, a director of the Institut de cinéma québécois and president of Aska Distribution.

Beautiful music for Cinar and Gagnon

MONTREAL - Cinar Films, a Montreal-based television producer and distributor and post-production specialist, has opened a high-technology recording centre with an inaugural recording by pianist André Gagnon.

The Cinar Studio Centre features three integrated studios including cinematic post-synchronization and sound effect capabilities.

The studio is located in a recently renovated production complex.

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Palace coup by Schein in Vancouver

VANCOUVER – Hannah Fisher has resigned as the executive director of the Vancouver International Film Festival (VIFF). Her decision came just a week after a surprise takeover of the board of directors led by Festival founding director Leonard Schein and just five months before the 1988 VIFF is due to begin.

There had been no indication of such a major change at the Festival until the night of the Society's Annual General Meeting, April 12. Schein and his "Vancouver Community Slate" greeted the few people attending with a campaign brochure.

"We want the Festival to keep as its priority Vancouver filmgoers," the brochure declared. "We think (it) should not become top heavy in administration and should carefully watch its expenditures so that we do not join the

(Vancouver Symphony Orchestra) in its financial problems."

The pamphlet also suggested that Society members vote for Schein, distributor Thomas Lightburn and Dr. Art Hister, host of *Doctor, Doctor* on CBC-TV. All three were elected along with like-minded Alan Franey.

The incumbent board's nomination committee, led by Daryl Duke of CKVU-TV, had recommended re-election of the incumbents – VIFF chairman Crawford Hawkins, arts entrepreneur David Y. H. Lui and Arts Club Theatre artistic director Bill Millerd – and Liberal lawyer John Swift who had been filling a vacancy by appointment. All were defeated.

The nominations from the floor had clearly come as a surprise to Fisher and the incumbent Board. A Media Release prepared beforehand said that "the 68th Annual Festival was the most successful in its history... attendance at the 177 screenings increased by 25% over the previous year.

"The Festival had eliminated its previously existing deficit of approximately \$60,000 through increased ticket sales and through

fundraising efforts of the board."

Audited reports backing up the claims on the press release were approved by the Annual General Meeting.

The day after the rout, director Daryl Duke resigned from the board (last year CKVU was a major VIFF sponsor), leaving Schein's slate with a clear majority. Fisher announced her resignation on April 21, was asked to reconsider by Schein, but decided to exit diplomatically.

"It's happened very naturally. April is my second anniversary of coming to the Festival. I've completed my two-year mandate and I feel it's time to explore some new options. There's a brand new board, it's new beginnings, and I feel it's new beginnings for me too," she told *Cinema Canada*.

"I feel I really have completed what I originally planned to do."

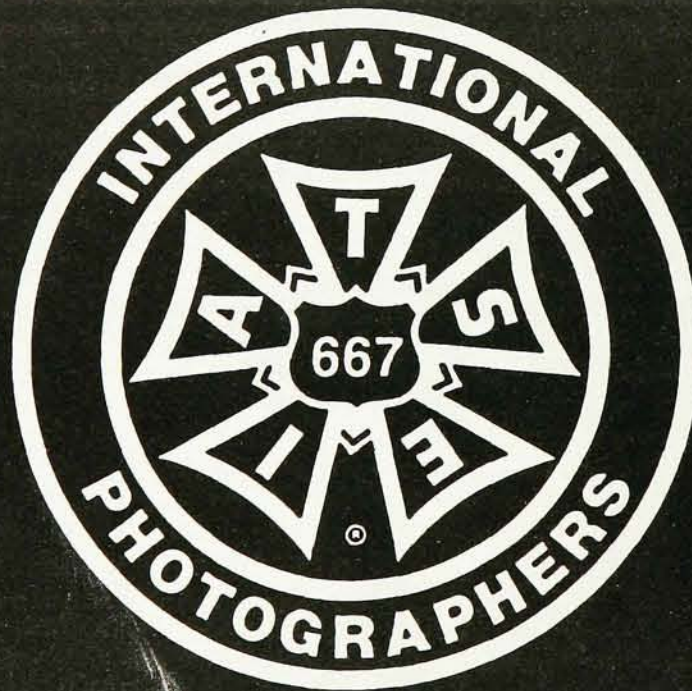
She denied taking the election of the new directors as a vote-of-non-confidence, saying "the new team has a lot of credibility and experience and they deserve a new beginning..." and hinted that she will continue working in Vancouver.

However, two years is hardly long enough to realize a vision, at least not as ambitious a vision as she seemed to be pursuing since taking over from Schein in 1986 when he left for Toronto's Festival of Festivals. He'd built a small but solid local event; she had begun to transform it into something with an international reputation, a mission both helped and hindered by last year's Commonwealth Conference.

Fisher has decided that there was little point in competing with the European connections enjoyed in Montreal and Toronto. Born in China and familiar with many eastern countries, she'd planned to focus on the Pacific Rim. The omnipresence of the Commonwealth meetings skewed her first year (in '86 she simply carried on with plans left behind by Schein) but she'd travelled extensively, making arrangements for 1988.

She'd also made a lot of headway on the financial front. Government money increased from \$188,000 in 1986 to nearly \$500,000 in '87 (in addition to a \$50,000 grant from Telefilm aimed at the deficit she'd inherited). Likewise,

continued on p. 58



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Eastern Wave

CHRIS MAJKA

Of flowers, warm winds and film

The calendar tells me its spring but Maritime weather being true to its nature, I'm sitting here this morning watching the snow accumulate on the crocuses in the backyard. Ah... if flowers could only speak, what would they say...?

If I were a tulip (perish the thought...) I would certainly long for a tropical breeze to fend off the glaciers which had descended upon me. My dreams might well come true, for a warm wind from China will shortly blow its jasmine fragrance over Nova Scotia's conifer hills, Not just a warm wind from China but, in fact, *Warm Wind from China*, a new dramatic film from Nova Scotia's (or, rather more precisely, a Prince Edward Islander come to roost on our fair shores) Kent Stetson. Director, writer, actor and raconteur, Stetson has been writer in residence at Neptune Theatre, this year. One of the fruits of his labour has been the play *Warm Wind* which was premiered, to great critical acclaim, this winter at the Sir James Dunn Theatre where it received a week-long run. Shortly thereafter Stetson went to Newfoundland where he staged the play again with a new cast, this time serving as both writer and director.

Evidently word of its success spread; recently Toronto-based Atlantis Films signed a contract with him to produce the project as a feature dramatic film. Stetson must have impressed the crew in Toronto for they've hired him as screenwriter for the project. Atlantis plans to finance the project with profits from previous ventures and will not be seeking Telefilm funds or broadcaster letter agreements. Rumours put the budget of the project well into seven figures and shooting may commence as early as June of this year. Fans of Stetson's imaginative work may well applaud!

Another writer, director, occasional actor, and raconteur on the local film scene is Glen Walton who also doubles as president of the Atlantic Filmmaker's Co-op (AFCOOP) and is an English professor at St. Mary's University. Glenn has been busy this winter preparing to direct a short dramatic film which he has written. It is an AFCCOP production with the working title of *The Room at the Back*. Short segments of it have already been shot; further shooting is scheduled for May and June of this year. Another project of Walton's has been *Ragged Island*, an 18th century historical feature which he wrote. In 1986 he shot the pilot segment in Lockeport, on Nova Scotia's south shore. Financing for the entire project has, however, proved elusive and Walton has been occupying himself with honing the script. Now, however, rumours hold that Walton is negotiating with a Montreal-based company which is interested in the script as part of a series of features which it plans to produce over the next year. Glenn tells me he hasn't yet put his name on any dotted lines but who knows what the future may bring?

Under the stewardship of AFCCOP coordinator Gary Swim, the Atlantic area film co-ops (AFCCOP, P. E. I.'s Island Media Arts Co-op, the New Brunswick Film Co-op and the Newfoundland independent Filmmaker's Co-operative) have embarked upon a very ambitious workshop program for this upcoming year. There are a total of nine workshops in all, commencing with an Assistant Director's Workshop taught by former AFCCOP stalwart (now making his home in Toronto) Cordell Wynne. This will be followed by workshops in Production Management led by Terry Greenlay and in Script Development with Bill MacGillivray, both Picture Planters tried and true. These will be followed in June, July and August by workshops in Sound Recording, Lighting, Camera and Acting for the Camera. The sessions will culminate in a Directing workshop led by Italian director Silvano Agosti. Depending on how things go, a film may or may not actually get made as a result of this workshop. It will then be followed by an Editing workshop in the fall. All in all it promises to be a comprehensive series of opportunities for filmmakers, both young and old, to learn and improve a gamut of filmmaking skills.

In other news, Brian Pollard's *A Wake for Milton* (*Cinema Canada*, No. 148) is now completed and is scheduled for a screening on the CBC *Reflections* series. Nigel Markham's film *Pelts*, being produced by the Atlantic Studio of the NFB, is still in post-production as is *Black Mothers, Black Daughters* but Les Krizan's film *Margaret Perry* is rumoured to be on the verge of release after a long hiatus in post-production. John Brett, filmmaker of the natural world, has been at work on a film called *Small Rivers* and I am told that it has been slated for a fall release on CBC's *Nature of Things* series. My fly on the wall also tells me that NFB's Elizabeth Clarke (who last year, on an interim basis, very capably steered the *Atlantic Festival Atlantique* through a crucial transition year) has been offered the post of Festival Director and shall shortly be leaving the Film Board to devote her energies full-time to this project.