

# People

## Drabinsky to receive B'nai B'rith Award



TORONTO – The list includes royalty, heads of state, ambassadors and renowned artists. On May 7 Garth Drabinsky, chairman and chief executive officer of Cineplex Odeon, becomes the first Canadian to join their ranks when he will be awarded the B'nai B'rith International Distinguished Achievement Award at a fundraising dinner at The Pierre Hotel in New York. The honour came as a total surprise to Drabinsky. "I had no idea," he told *Cinema Canada*. "I certainly had no idea who had previously won this award. When I did an investigation of it I was shocked and pleasingly surprised as anyone could be."

In the past Drabinsky has turned down offers of awards as part of a fundraising dinner because he "felt uncomfortable about it and I just didn't feel the affinity towards the organization or could see an objective satisfied in the evening in accordance with my philosophy." With B'nai B'rith it was different.

Drabinsky saw an opportunity to combat racism and prejudice in North America, the extent of which was brought home to him when he distributed Martin Scorsese's controversial film *The Last Temptation of Christ*. He found "it brought all sorts of anti-Semitism and neo-Nazi commentary out of parts of Canada and America. Lives were being threatened, irrational thoughts were

pervading." Drabinsky was shocked. He said, "It hit me over the head one more time that it just takes a spark to reignite the mentality that existed in Germany in WW2."

In conjunction with the B'nai B'rith, Drabinsky came up with a plan to utilize the proceeds of the award fundraising dinner to establish a lecture series and a lecture bureau in his name to combat prejudice and help develop mutual understanding and cooperation among people. Drabinsky feels strongly that "you have to continually preach enlightenment and rational pragmatic thought in dealing with human relations." He hopes that the lecture series can be "a source of inspiration and positive direction" and will have "an enduring value that I could be associated with for the rest of my life."

The award dinner is being co-chaired by Charles R. Bronfman and Sid Sheinberg. Allan Gottlieb, former Canadian ambassador to the United States and currently chairman of the Canada Council and publisher of *Saturday Night*, will be guest speaker. Shirley MacLaine will present the award to Drabinsky for "his passionate and lifelong devotion to art and entertainment and his extraordinary entrepreneurial ability which has enabled him to bring that devotion to millions of people, enlivening and enriching their lives."

Gina Mallet will attempt to

further enrich as many lives as possible, including her own, with the authorized biography of Drabinsky, to be published by McClelland and Stewart and released in hardcover in the fall of 1990.

Mallet worked for *TIME Magazine* in New York before joining *The Toronto Star* as a theatre critic. This is her first book.

## Vintas: looking for the ultimate sinister role

LOS ANGELES – He may look and sound like Pierre E. Trudeau but this time out Gustav Vintas will play Dr. Emile Manfred, a fictional mad scientist whose macabre experiments with human longevity are the subject of *Tales from The Crypt*, a television pilot for HBO.



Vintas, an Argentina-born Canadian and former medical student at McGill University, will be directed in his new role

by Richard Donner (*Lethal Weapon*) who hand-picked the actor.

*Dig that cat... he's real gone* is one of three 30-minute episodes in the pilot which is also scheduled for a theatrical release.

"I love the sinister role," says Vintas, "I know that I am flexible enough to play other roles but I would like to be slated as the new anti-hero."

Vintas' recent film credits includes a part in *Lethal Weapons* and *Verne Miller*. He will appear with Lynn Redgrave and Tony Curtis in *Midnight*, scheduled for production this summer and if Quebecers watch closely they will see him in a Labatt's commercial, this spring, as an orchestra leader.

He has appeared in the television sci-fi series *V* and the BBC production entitled *Arena: The Caravaggio Conspiracy*. He was Dr. Kondoleon in *Micki and Maude* and a journalist in *Protocol*.

Vintas says it is only a matter of time before someone is casting for the former Canadian prime minister and he'll be there.

## Martin Harbury joins Atlantis

TORONTO – Martin Harbury, co-producer of the Genie Award-winning *Comic Book Confidential*, has joined Atlantis Films of Toronto as a fulltime staff producer.

Harbury, who started in the film business in 1975 with the Toronto-based Insight Productions, is now going to France to produce *Firing Squad*.

"It's a World War II movie about Italian troops in Europe at the end of the war," Harbury told *Cinema Canada*, "and my first for Atlantis. I've known (Atlantis co-founder) Seaton McLean since 1977 and I've always felt a bond with them. There is a tremendous amount of youth and energy here. Not only am I working

on projects that interest me, but I'm not a one-man band anymore. I don't have to wait for the delivery service before I can go out."

Since his Insight days, Harbury has mostly been working freelance on a number of projects including *Born to Run*, a documentary on jogging, *Clown White* with Michael Ironside, *Hockey Night* with Megan Follows and Rick Moranis, and a documentary on the making of *Anne of Green Gables*.



"I have known Ron Mann for a long time. In the summer of 1986 he needed someone to act as a co-producer on *Comic Book*. It deals with a subject that nobody would have thought was of wide interest. It's doing amazingly well and it was the hit of the show in Berlin. Ron is your classic fanatical filmmaker. He has a natural feel for where there is a cult market."

## Lou Natale wins Genie

TORONTO – *Cowboys Don't Cry*, the movie, got swept aside by *Dead Ringers* at this year's Genies, but "Cowboys Don't Cry", the song, won Best Original Song for its composers, Toronto-based Lou Natale and director Anne Wheeler.

"I'm just glad there wasn't a song in *Dead Ringers*", Natale joked.

"*Cowboys* is my first feature. I've worked a lot for Atlantis, doing episodes of *The Twilight Zone* for them and *The Ray*

*Bradbury Theatre*, for which I was nominated for two Genies and an ACTRA award. Atlantis recommended me to Anne Wheeler. She heard my stuff and said let's go with it. I wrote the song and Anne wrote a verse that was better than mine. I liked it, so we went with that."

Natale is a self-taught musician who studied English at the University of Toronto and went on to play in the local bar scene for a number of years. "I was playing in your average no-name rock bands. I played the Toronto studios and the Northern Ontario bar circuit and everything in between." A friend recommended him to people at Atlantis and his first score was for *The Bamboo Brush*. He went on to score *Boys and Girls*, the Oscar-winning short, and many others for Atlantis, including *A Child's Christmas in Wales*. "I've been really fortunate to have a tie with Atlantis. They've been doing work that gives an opportunity to a composer."



Natale originally comes from Rochester, New York 20 years ago during the height of the Vietnam war. That year the draft was changed into a lottery system. "My number was 101 and that year they drafted up to 100. At that time it was a sin to go against your country. It would have been a really tough choice. I've just finished doing a score for a movie, *Shoot Me*, for Lauron Productions. It is about a character in 1969 who comes up from Harvard to work at a summer camp and is faced with the decision whether he is going to dodge or go back. I can sure relate to it."

## Next Month:

- *Denys Arcand, Atom Egoyan go to Cannes*
- *Special B. C. section*
- *Advanced film schools*



## Hallis in New York

MONTREAL – A screening of *Chopi Music of Mozambique* on May 18 at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and selection as a finalist for a Blue Ribbon at the American Film Festival, is a fine bit of vindication for Filmmaker Ron Hallis.



*Chopi Music of Mozambique* was at the centre of controversy when in 1988 it was nominated for a Golden Sheaf Award by the preselection committee of the Yorkton International Film and Video Festival and subsequently dropped with a whole category of films on grounds that they were not good enough. Hallis went to the press particularly peeved that the jury had only watched the first five minutes of each film.

"That was painful and irritable. It was like poison ivy: the more you scratched the more it spread," says Hallis.

This half-hour documentary on Mozambique's wooden xylophone ensemble premiered in 1987 at the Montreal International Festival of New Cinema and Video and is being distributed by Les Blank through Flower Films in California.

## Roy Bonisteel quits *Man Alive*

OTTAWA – Roy Bonisteel, the genial and popular host of CBC's *Man Alive*, made a dramatic public departure from the long-running show last month, complaining he was "fed up" with the

network's attempts to muzzle him.

"The dissatisfaction started about four years ago," Bonisteel told *Cinema Canada*. "I got into some trouble five years ago when I signed a petition to halt the cruise missile. Around that time they drew up a contract that said that anything I did outside the CBC had to be approved by management of Current Affairs. Up until that time I had been allowed to do anything I wanted to. I was trusted not to do anything that would embarrass *Man Alive* or the CBC.

"So I went along with this the best I could and things weren't too bad until around the time of the cutbacks and the CBC got kind of nervous. They really began to enforce these journalistic policies and they started to say no to those things that I wanted to do. I don't like somebody telling me



what I can or can't do and I don't really agree with the basic journalistic policy anyway. I think it's a pile of crap. The audience out there knows who I am. I have views on controversial issues and I think my audience has the right to expect me to state those views.

"I have been the only host of *Man Alive* and there has never been a break. It's sort of nice to get it off my shoulders. I never felt any pressure in terms of the content of the show whatsoever. I will be doing a couple of columns and I've had three offers for books. I've also had some other offers from other networks and from independents, but I'm holding off everything for a while. I'm taking six weeks off to go to Australia."

## Appointments

### Bureau joins Trudeau and Johnston

MONTREAL – André Bureau, former chairman of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) has joined a prestigious Montreal law firm.

The partners at Heenan Blaikie announced recently that Bureau has joined the firm as a counsel.

The Rt. Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau and the Hon. Donald J. Johnston practice law at Heenan Blaikie.

Bureau studied law at Laval University and the Institut de Droit Comparé de l'Université de Paris.

### Paul de Silva heads CBC series

TORONTO – Paul de Silva is the executive in charge of production of a new half-hour CBC-TV anthology series.

The series, which will reflect Canada's cultural diversity, will be produced independently in part and by the CBC regional production centres.

De Silva, whose company Toronto Talkies Inc. produced the *Inside Stories* series for CBC, will be assisted by CBC Executive Producer Robert Allen.

The appointment was made recently by Nada Harcourt, Creative Head of Dramatic Series for CBC Television.

### Savoie: Portrayal of women at CBC

OTTAWA – Micheline Savoie has been appointed Coordinator, Portrayal of Women in Programming at CBC.

Formerly the head of press information for the City of Montreal, Savoie will be responsible for the coordination of CBC policies pertaining to women, native people, the disabled, visible and ethnic minorities on English and French radio and television programs.

The appointment, effective April 3, was announced by William T. Armstrong, CBC executive vice-president.

### Roy goes to market at WFF

MONTREAL – Robert Roy has been appointed vice-president of the Montreal Film, Television and Video Market.

The former director of programming at Radio-Canada will oversee the daily operation of the market, Aug. 28 to Sept. 2, which coincides with the Montreal World Film Festival, Aug. 24 to Sept. 4.

Roy is a member of several organizations promoting film and television in Quebec and is also a member of the administrative council of the Banff Television Festival Foundation.

Roy resigned early this month as Quebec director of the Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television. He gave personal reasons.

### Landecker to Cinar

MONTREAL – Peter Landecker has been named director of development at Cinar Films.

A native of Los Angeles, Landecker has worked at Embassy Communications and was development director at Sascha Schneider Productions.

He worked most recently with Telescene Productions and was assistant producer on *Bethune: The Making of a Hero* and *Snake Eater*.

The appointment was announced by Ron Weinberg, Cinar vice-president.

### CBC appoints two more

TORONTO – Two appointments were announced recently in CBC English television.

Bruce McKay is the new director of television production for the CBC network and Jean-Claude Tanguay has been named director of television planning for the CBC broadcast centre.

McKay joined the CBC in 1970. He has been a strategic planning manager, assistant network program director, senior producer with *The Journal* and director of television facilities planning for the broadcast centre. His appointment was announced recently by Ivan Fecan, director of CBC television programming.

Tanguay was most recently director of television production and administration CBC-TV entertainment programming. Prior to that he was manager of the Toronto production centre.

His appointment was announced recently by Denis Harvey, vice-president of English television.

### CFTA 1989-90 Board of Directors

TORONTO – Ian McDougall, co-producer of *Anne of Green Gables*, *Passion and Paradise*, and producer of *Captain Power*, has been re-elected Chairman of the Board for the Canadian Film and Television Association. In making the announcement, CFTA president Sam Jephcott said that the most important challenges facing the new board were researching the potential effects on the industry of the federal government's proposed value-added tax and convincing the feds of the need for a refundable tax credit scheme to replace the old CCA tax shelter.

Other board members include Ronald Lillie (president, Lauron Productions) Vice-Chairman, Production; R. Stephen Ellis (president, Ellis Enterprises) Vice-Chairman, Distribution; Harold Eady (president, Medallion Labs) Vice-Chairman, Facilities; Elanor Olmstead (entertainment lawyer and former CEO of Nelvana) Vice-Chairman, Services; Sanderson Layng, Treasurer; and entertainment lawyer Douglas Barrett, Secretary.

### Cannell's New Appointments

Cannell Studios has appointed Ralph Alderman as General Manager of the soon, to-be-opened North Shore Studios. He'll be responsible for the entire facility, including rent and lease of offices and seven soundstages.

And, Cannell has also added a Publicity Co-ordinator to its Vancouver operation. Lee Anne Muldoon is in charge of media visits to Cannell sets as well as the North Shore complex. Lee Anne is a graduate of the Vancouver Film School and the University of Lethbridge.

### Mary Kahn Joins Atlantis as Producer

Michael MacMillan, President of Atlantis Films Limited announced that Mary Kahn has joined the company as Producer.

Ms Kahn has worked on numerous film and television drama projects in Canada including the two Atlantis series *The Ray Bradbury Theater* (1985) and *Really Weird Tales* (1986). Most recently, Ms. Kahn produced the Paragon Motion Pictures television series *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*.

For Atlantis, Ms. Kahn's first project will be producing 24-one-hour episodes of the new television drama series *Dude* (working title) to film in Vancouver and Mission, British Columbia, currently in pre-production.