

## LINDA EARL CHARLES MANDEL



CALGARY – The arrival of CBC Newsworld at CBRT Calgary is a shot in the arm for the local newsroom. The 24-hour news channel started on basic cable July 31st. The 6 p.m. midnite (ET) weekly slot called *This Country* originates in Calgary with veteran CBC reporter Whit Fraser as anchor. Seven producers and two directors have been hired to supervise the expanded format. As executive producer John McQuaker explains, "We plan to break the 1 minute 30 second formula and get into some depth behind the headlines." And hopefully show off the color of the Canadian psyche. *This Country* will feature daily evening reports from every region.

Across town, CFAC-TV eagerly anticipates a major profile boost. Western International Communications Ltd. of Vancouver is a waiting CRTC approval to purchase the Maclean-Hunter-owned station. Upgrade plans include news bureaus in Edmonton, Ottawa and Hong Kong, increased children's and variety programming as well as serious forays into drama production.

## PROMISES, PROMISES

If the Canadian content promises are true, the presence of another broadcast licensor is welcome news for Calgary independents like Douglas Berquist and Nancy Marano. Berquist wrote, produced and directed the half-hour experimental drama, *Soldier, speak*, a Calgary Society of Independent Filmmakers project which wrapped in late June. *Soldier, speak* is about three Louis Riel Rebellion soldiers lost in a nightmare from which they cannot awaken.

Marano is a recent graduate of SAIT's Professional Motion Picture Program. The young economist-turned-filmmaker raised \$75,000 to produce her first feature film, *A Bit Of Heaven*, which was shot in Calgary from mid-June until the end of Stampede. The film is about Luna, a successful stockbroker who rediscovers her artistic talents with the help of a park bum, a mime and a cast of colorful characters, some believable, some not. Marano describes her first film as "a modern-day Alice in Wonderland"

## SYLVAN SALVAGED

It appears that the *Sylvan Lake* producers will catch the dying days of summer after all. The projected television series has now been scaled down to a 90-minute television movie for CFRN, a CTV affiliate in Edmonton. Principal photography is expected to start mid-August. Cast and crew will spend two weeks on location in the central Alberta resort town of Sylvan Lake and two more weeks in an Edmonton studio. Arvi Liimatainen and Allan Stein will co-produce with Don Truckey of *Street Legal* fame, penning the pilot script.

EDMONTON – Local talent was put to work when *The Ray Bradbury Theater* decided to film four episodes of the TV series in Alberta. The series began shooting June 19 and continued for four weeks – one week per episode. The four Alberta shots were part of a new series of 12, which should be airing even as you read this.

The series provided a great opportunity for Alberta actors and production people. The majority of the actors were Albertans. Three-quarters of the crew, including several key positions, were filled by Albertans.

The Alberta shows were co-produced by Toronto's Atlantis Films Limited and Edmonton's Kicking Horse Productions. Directors included Randy Bradshaw, David Brandes, Alan Kroeker, and Brad Turner.

## INSIGHT '89

The Edmonton Women's Film and Video Festival, *In Sight '89*, will take place October 12-15. The festival, now in its second year, features films and videos directed, produced and written by women and about women. Besides screenings, the festival will offer discussions and workshops.

Equality, unfortunately, does not extend to language. The brochure for *In Sight '89* specifies that "works not in English must be sub-titled or be accompanied by an English-language script or synopsis". Presumably, then, English films will either be sub-titled in French or accompanied by French-language scripts and synopses. Somehow, though, I doubt that.

## BRAVE NEWSWORLD

When Edmonton's CBC Newsworld bureau kicked into action July 31st, the producer at the helm was Larry Donovan. Donovan is the former news director for CKUA Radio in Alberta and, most recently, the London, England bureau chief for Christian Science Monitor News Radio.

## Toronto gears up for 14th Festival of Festivals

TORONTO – Norman Jewison's *In Country*, with Bruce Willis and Emily Lloyd, will be the opening night gala and Denys Arcand's *Jesus of Montreal*, Anne Wheeler's *Bye Bye Blues*, Euzhan Palcy's *A Dry White Season*, and Steven Soderbergh's *Sex, Lies and Videotape* will all receive gala presentations at Toronto's 14th Festival of Festivals this September 7-16th.

*Jesus of Montreal* earned the Special Jury Prize in Cannes, while Soderbergh's film, his feature debut independently produced in the United States, was the unexpected winner of the prestigious Palme d'Or award. Loosely based on the life of her mother, Wheeler's *Bye Bye Blues* is a period piece set in Alberta and India during the Second World War. Palcy's *A Dry White Season*, shot in Zimbabwe and set in South Africa with Marlon Brando, Donald Sutherland and Susan Sarandon, is her first film since the 1985 release, *Sugar Cane Alley*.

This year there will be a special retrospective

devoted to Polish Cinema programmed by Piers Handling and a spotlight on the works of Polish Director Krzysztof Kieslowski (*A Short Film About Killing*, *A Short Film About Love*). To recognize its bicentennial, France will be honoured with a series entitled French Cinema Today, with emphasis on the work of Jean-Jacques Beineix, Luc Besson and Bertrand Blier, and the Open Vault will screen films made about the French Revolution. Surfacing: Canadian Women's Cinema will focus on the unique contribution made by Canadian women directors, including Sandy Wilson, Anne Wheeler, Léa Pool and others.

Entertainment lawyer Michael Levine and producer Bill Marshall have been named co-chairmen of this year's Trade Forum, which takes place September 11-13th. Levine is a partner in the Toronto law firm of Goodman and Goodman, while Marshall, a co-founder of the Toronto Festival in 1976, is currently chairman of Europa Production Investment Corporation, a London-based film financing and producing entity. Marshall was the co-chairman of the 1984 Trade Forum. This year's Forum will focus on the Global Pillage, described as "a producer's guide to survival in the swirling world of pan-Canadian, pan-American and pan-European pandemonium."

## Toronto Festival announces Perspective Canada program

TORONTO – Toronto's Festival Program Director Piers Handling announced this year's selection for the 6th annual Perspective Canada Program. All Canadian feature films presented during the festival will be eligible for the Toronto-City Award for Excellence, which carries a cash prize of \$25,000. The award is offered by the City of Toronto and the independent television station, City TV.

Atom Egoyan's latest, *Speaking Parts*, will open the series, which includes Sandy Wilson's *American Boyfriends* (her sequel to *My American Cousin*), Carlo Liconi's *Brown Bread Sandwiches*, Vic Sarin's *Cold Comfort*, Allan King's *Termini Station*, John Walker's *Strand - Under the Dark Cloth*, Yves Simoneau's *Dans le ventre du dragon*, Izidore Musallam's *Foreign Nights*, Paul Cowan's *Justice Denied*, Bruce McDonald's *Roadkill*, Jean-Pierre Gariépy's *Sous les draps, les étoiles*, Peter Mettler's *The Top of His Head*, Bruno Pacheco's *The Traveller*, Jacques Leduc's *Trois pommes à côté du sommeil*, Jean Beaudry and François Bouvier's *Les matins infidèles*, William MacGillivray's *The Vacant Lot*, John Smith's

*Welcome to Canada*, and Colin Browne's *White Lake*.

Short films include David Rimmer's *Black Cat White Cat - It's a Good Cat If It Catches the Mouse*, Mike Hoolboom's *Brand*, Holly Dale's *Dead Meat*, Alanis Obomsawin's *No Address*, Barbara Sternberg's *Tending Towards the Horizontal*, and many others.

Handling noted at the press conference that despite the rumours of the death of the Canadian feature film industry, the committee received over 200 submissions, 60 of which were features. This year will be the last for program coordinator Geoff Pevere. John Sharkey, currently programming films for the Centre of Advanced Film Studies, has joined the Festival as a programmer for Perspective Canada.

## Watson brewing new series

TORONTO – Patrick Watson is the executive producer and director of a pilot for a new television series about micro-breweries in Canada. *Something Brewing* is being produced by Caroline Furey Bamford for Foxglove Films Ltd. in association with the CBC. Robert Markle is the host.

According to a press release, "*Something Brewing* will be a series of personal essays by Robert Markle in which he will travel throughout Canada visiting micro-breweries located in beautiful and interesting settings."