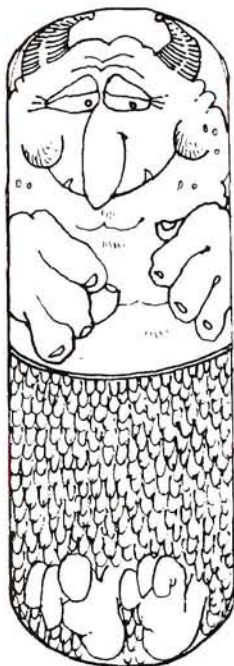


# CAPSULES

by Natalie Edwards

A personal and totally arbitrary selection of 2 dozen short films from among hundreds.

drawing by Danute Sarumas



**At Home.** Dir. Martin Lavut. A favorite 1968 Canadian short. Thirteen ridiculous absurd, and delightful minutes watching an eccentric collector fill up his apartment with everything from Kewpie dolls to plump dimpled old ladies. CC: 19: 61-62. D: CF MDC 1968.

**At 99: A Portrait of Louise Tandy Murch.** Dir. Deepa Saltzman. 1975 Canadian Film Award winner for a documentary film under 30 minutes, this astonishing first film captures the essence of a most remarkable near centurian with such respect and love that her contagious optimism and determined strength elicited prolonged applause and bravos at a Toronto showing. CC: 17: 80. D. + P: Sunrise Film 344 Walmer Rd. Toronto, 1975.

**Aura-Gone.** Dir. Ne. Livingston. After a disconcerting opener, the film settles to a prolonged study of the glass doors of Mt. Sinai Hospital, Toronto. The sound track variations and multiple mirrored reflections as well as actual entry and exit of people through these doors creates an hypnotic layered succession of images seen from a fixed camera position, (reminiscent of being left waiting in the car when one was a child). CC: 23: 39. D: CFMDC. P: York University, 1975.

**Backlot Canadiana.** Dir. Peter Rowe. This is the painfully funny account of how our potential Canadian film quota plans were scrapped in 1946 for mere mentions of our country in Hollywood films. In a lively 20 minutes you can get the same sense of indignation and irony that Berton's well-documented tome *Hollywood's Canada* delivers rather more heavily. CC: 20: 62. D: P. Rowe, 9 Cunningham Ave., Toronto, Ont., 1974.

**The Christmas Tree.** Dir. George Mendeluk. The music of the Ukrainian Bandurist Chorus back this colourful half-hour folktale of a poor little Ukrainian boy and his loss of a beloved fir tree and eventual discovery of the magic of Christmas. Adapted from a Kochubinsky story, it is a pleasant routine Christmas show with the added display of some Ukrainian folk clothes and customs. Prod: Yalynka Films. D: Farouq Films (E & F) 1974.

**The Clinton Special.** Dir. Michael Ondaatje. An exploration of the means and the ends achieved when Theatre Passe Muraille moved into the Ontario countryside to construct a theatrical production out of the farmers and their histories, which does far more than reproduce the show or record its production. The actors, the farmers, and the conversion of life into performance creates a many-levelled examination of the basis of theatre by skillfully employing film. CC: 22: 17. D: CFMDC 1975.



The Clinton Special

**Cream Soda.** Dir. Holly Dale. Bad sound and dim red light do not seriously harm but rather enhance this direct-cinema look at the inside of a body-rub parlour. Uneven, and roughly put-together, the 12 minute short carries an air of authenticity as we eavesdrop on some unusual shop-talk. CC: 23: 39. D: CFMDC 1975.

**Da Da Da.** Dir. Ian Bell, Peter Hodecki, Charles Macrae, G. Gray Miller, Jack Mongovan, Denis Neil. First prize winner for animation at the Student Film Festival, it exults in the wonders of the water closet, as a song and dance routine begins in toilet stalls and ends with the space transformed into a studio musical set, all in less than two minutes. CC: 23: 36. P: Sheridan College. D: CFMDC. 1975.

**Her Decision.** Dir. Glen Saltzman. Styled as a black and white silent this 17 minute parody is backed by the accompaniment of virtuoso silent film composer Charles Hofmann, formerly of MOMA. The updated uptight ending is something of a disappointment, adding a bitter seventies touch to a basically delightful little facsimile. CC: 23: 38. D: Gorge Cinema, Elora, Ontario, 1973.

**Love at First Sight.** Dir. Rex Bromfield. Valeri Bromfield and Dan Ayroyd, trained in the art of comic review, here present a most unusual pair exploring love from a neglected viewpoint. Bromfield's direction doesn't bombard with gags, but lets the audience find the humour of the situation and enjoy the quirkiness of life. CC: 15, 77; D: New Cinema. 1974.

**Four to Four:** Dir. Peter Thomson. This adaptation of Michel Gameau's play *Quatre à Quatre* in which four generations of the women of one family meet in a mystical mind-space to compare philosophies, desires and tribulations in their lives, offers acting plums to the four principals: Trudy Young, Judith Hodgson, Michèle Chicoine and Charlotte Éliant. But the extensive use of close-ups and overly theatrical approach make it deadly as a film, despite sturdy efforts by all.

**Lyle Leffler - Last of the Medicine Men.** Dir. Michael Hirsh. An entertaining and unusual documentary of an 84 year old maker of tonics and teas, who once sold snake oil and played the accordion while his wife Baby wrestled a dancing bear. CC: 17: 81. D. + P: Nelvana Ltd., 525 King St. W., Toronto. 1974.

**The Magical Mountain.** Dir. Josef Ruff and Bob Lyons. A stunning hour-long documentary on the island of Java in Indonesia that overflows with superb photography and carefully controlled material so that the end result is a non-structured awareness of the people, customs, geography and economics, with no direct narrative or voice-over instruction. An old man tells anecdotes and relays bits of wisdom, Noel Harrison sings 14 light songs, and the camera roams the country, while we feel as if we truly were visiting. D & P: Ruffcut Film Productions Ltd., 70 Dupont St. Toronto. 1975.

**Main Street Soldier.** Dir. Leonard Yakir. A half-hour cinéma vérité acquaintance with Ray McClear, a World War II vet and professional drunken bum whose philosophies and judgments are the raw material of an O'Neil or Callaghan. The young Winnipeg filmmaker and his experienced subject exploit each other for their own needs, revealing a sensitive, fascinating relationship which exists just below the surface of the film. CC: 21: 38-40, 48. D: CFMDC. 1972.

**Metamorphosis.** Dir. Barry Greenwald. Bob Green performs with skill as the everyday ordinary bourgeois man who adds an element of excitement and adventure to his regular daily routine by incredible additions to the surprising number of things he learns to manage alone in an elevator, going down. Under the pillulated humour lies an ominous sense of futility and the brief 10 minute film is strongly controlled for subtle effect. B/W: CC: 23: 38. D: Farouq Films. P: Conestoga College. 1975.

**My Friend Vince.** Dir. David Rothberg. Vince is a small time con artist and exploiter of human vulnerability, and under the lens of Howard Alk we see him reveal a piteable and unappealing self in this 40 minute direct cinema portrait. But when the roles are reversed and Vince and Alk interrogate director Rothberg, the prying medium shows how everyone is vulnerable under scrutiny and the result is an excellent prod for discussions of motives and integrity in film. CC: 22: 49. D: CFMDC. 1974.

**One Hand Clapping.** Dir. Clay Borris. This is primarily a film about a family and how they handle the problem of a deaf-mute daughter. It is not a study of the feelings of the girl herself. As the family is the filmmaker's own the straightforward and unsentimental approach has added values in this frank and unpretentious exploration. CC: 19: 63. D: CFMDC.

**Potlatch.** Dir. Dennis Wheeler. Solidly researched, strongly motivated, the film reveals the injustice of the infamous Potlatch laws that forbade the Indians their ancient tribal rites by which surplus wealth was exchanged for status. Documentary footage, old film clips, stills and dramatic reconstructions present the evidence in depth. CC: 21: 49. D: Apply to CFMDC.

**Reunion.** Dir. Murray Battle. An ex-soldier, released from prison for his wife's funeral, cannot cope with the present, and tries to retreat to a vanished past. Jack Zimmerman and Karyn Morris are fine in this 28 minute 16mm York University film shot sensitively by Mark Irwin. CC: 17: 81. D: CFMDC. 1974.

**Second Impressions.** Dir. Lorne Marin. A non-narrative experimental 9 minute colour film investigating the nature of the frame, of space, and of events in time by use of disconcerting impressions and double exposure. Images appear, disappear and overlap accompanied by soft classical music

and enveloped in a dreamy mesmerized atmosphere. CC: 23: 37. D: CFMDC. 1974.



Michael Asti-Rose in Silent Movie

**Silent Movie.** Dir. Michael Asti-Rose. Somewhere between the Goons and Kafka resides the ineluctable humour of Asti-Rose, an astonishing, creative and quite unique filmmaker. This silent film really is, and furthermore it is funny, weird, and somewhat suggestive of paranoia, schizophrenia and other parlour games. Try it, but don't quote me. D: CFMDC. 1975.

**Thursday Auction.** Dir. Rob Wallace. This 15 minute colour documentary captured the noise and colour of an animal auction in the Kitchener, Ontario stockyards as well as first and second prize in the Student Film Festival in Montreal this year. It's a routine work documenting a passing occasion, with appropriate rich dark interior colour and light. CC: 23: 37. D: CFMDC. 1975.

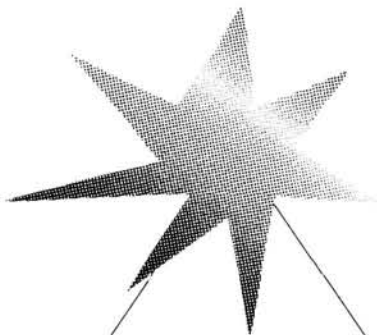
**Two Four Time.** Dir. Leila Basen. Based on the influence of magazine literature on gullible people, this tiny anecdotal short offers an appropriately glossy miniature of a couple, played by Liz Widdess and Richard Headaffin, who would like their emotional life to be as slick as their dress and environment. CC: 24: 1975. P: York University. D: none.



Liz Widdess in Two Four Time

**The Understudy.** Dir. Paul Shapiro. Five former Ryerson students created this interesting little fantasy fiction about an actor who stumbles upon a disconcerting old man (charmingly played by David Beard) in a strange old house where the forties seem to overlap the present, and even the fact of death seems part of play-acting. D & P: Daybreak Film Productions, 67 Portland St., Toronto. 1975.

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