

drips of maple syrup and tends to give one a glucose overdose in the area of the heart.

The film is a kind of backfired, shoestring **American Graffiti** meets **Earthquake**. There is hardly an area from scripting to direction, from acting to editing which does not deserve derisive comment. It is awkward to a fault and one can only warm to it as a mother to a less than gifted child. A local Winnipeg critic commented that he found it the funniest film of the year. He quickly added that all pains should be taken to contain the film in the province as it was a total embarrassment to Manitobans.

The Melting Pot is a strange mixture of fact and fiction. Authentic police garb which looks amazingly out of place mingles with modern day blue jeans complete with logos. Vintage period cars park in front of 70s superstructures, etc. The film constantly

annoys the viewer with illogical responses set in factual situations. This culminates when the people doing the sand-bagging defy the army's orders to evacuate the area. The troops then raise their guns, and one of the townspeople breaks into a rendition of the Lord's Prayer, followed by several more versions in various languages.

However, the ludicrousness of the film does not stop here. It is a sex film without sex, a 50s music film with non-50s type songs, and an action picture without thrills. When the flood finally hits, it has all the force of a man breaking down a door and lasts the equivalent period of time. There are no floating cars or houses or really anything visual to suggest the catastrophe. It all resembles a mud-slinging event more than anything else. **The Melting Pot** leaks.

Len Klady

body learns, sitting for hours, days, weeks, months and years at school desks, in preparation for more advanced slouching later on.

Job's Garden is in a way an epilogue, albeit in another medium, to T.C. McLuhan's book **Touch the Earth**, when Indians themselves speak, eloquently and directly, of the way of life which for centuries enabled them to live in harmony and equilibrium with the material resources which modern industrial society is now, with purposeful efficiency, destroying.

Viewers interested in **Job's Garden** as a "film for film's sake" are, however, likely to be disappointed. The film takes too long to make its point, the colour correction and exposure are often dismal, and the hand-held shots are consistently unsteady. In addition, the constant use of the zoom lens is thoroughly disconcerting. Despite this, the fact that the film was made, period, in my view overrides its technical shortcomings.

Jaan Pill

REVIEWS OF SHORT FILMS

Boyce Richardson's

Job's Garden

d. Boyce Richardson. ph. Guy Borremans, Gilbert Hérodier. ed. Jacques Leroux. tech. consult. Michel Brault. narr. Bernard Assiniwi. songs. Samson Nahacappo, Job Bearskin, Isiah Awashish. p. Jean-Pierre Fournier. p.c. Fournier/Richardson, 1974. col. Colour, 16mm. running time. 52 minutes. dist. Canadian Film Makers' Distribution Centre.

Job Bearskin, the Job in **Job's Garden**, has hunted all his life along the La Grande River 600 miles north of Montreal. **Job's Garden**, a Fournier/Richardson production directed by Boyce Richardson, records Bearskin's reaction to the flooding of his people's hunting grounds by the James Bay hydroelectric project.

A highlight of the film is a visit to LG-2, a hydroelectric job site by the La Grande River. "It is just like ripping something apart," Bearskin says when he sees the work camp. "It does not look good. It looks like people have been fighting. Everything is shattered. I've seen it before, in the mating season for the bear. They fight and when they do that they usually tear

up a lot of land. That is how it looks here."

"I used to ask them what they were doing," Bearskin says of his first contacts with white men in the bush. "But they never told me anything. They always told me only: 'We are working.' That was their answer. I guess this is what they meant."

"I know they are only beginning their work. There is much more land to be destroyed."

Despite the effects of a leg injury, Bearskin is seen in **Job's Garden** to stand, sit and walk with a remarkable sense of bodily ease. His body maintains a beautiful and subtle balance in the field of gravity in his movements and gestures. His neck is relaxed, his spine is straight, and his rib cage is flexible.

When Bearskin sits, he bends his body from the hip joint instead of from the waist, revealing at the same time the quick spring-like action of the spine which F.M. Alexander, originator of the Alexander Technique, has labelled the "anti-gravity reflex", of which the free functioning is rarely seen in adults in advanced industrial society.

In terms of body language, what does our own society teach us to do with our bodies, in contrast to a society such as Job Bearskin's? It teaches us to slouch. That's what the

Warren Zucker's

Novitiate

d. Warren Zucker. ph. Lance Carlson, Jerry Fijalkowski. ed. Eric Young. exec. p. Tony Bond. p. Tim Hurson. p. manager. René Egger. p.c. Caprice Films (Toronto), 1973. col. Colour. running time. 25 minutes. dist. Canadian Film Makers' Distribution Centre.

There is an aphorism I enjoy, based on a line from William Blake, to the effect that "We become what we behold."

The ambience in Toronto, for example, is one which tends, as a friend puts it, "to line us up and make us go a certain way." Toronto is a city where one beholds surfaces and appearances set aside from nature. Its ambience emphasizes gloss and rectilinearity.

It is interesting to consider, in this context, how the ambience of a city is reflected in the films made within it. For example Warren Zucker's **Novitiate**, shown on CBC in March, 1974, is, most quintessentially, a Toronto product.

"Let's not kid ourselves," explains Harry Lavery, the young novice in the film, who has turned from a suc-

FILM REVIEWS

successful career as a male model to a successful priest-in-the-making. "The Church is good theatre. The liturgy is good theatre. And another aspect is that there's a good product; it's a great commercial. Good sponsor - He doesn't change agencies. He sends out a lot of company reps. OK?"

It is not novel, of course, to approach religious ritual from the perspective of dramaturgy. Thomas Merton, whose spiritual journey from Cambridge and Columbia to the Abbey of Gethsemane (as chronicled in **The Seven Storey Mountain**) bears at least a superficial resemblance to Lavery's, likewise spoke of the Mass as a kind of ballet, with similar precise, prescribed movements and gestures.

Merton, however, lived in the inner world of spiritual experience to which music and ritual were adjuncts and not ends in themselves. Lavery, on the other hand, appears to live primarily in the "outer world" of everyday consensual reality familiar to the world of commercials and television in Toronto.

As a natural "performer," Lavery is nevertheless an ideal subject for an enjoyable film. A high point in **Novitiate** occurs in a close-up of Lavery as he responds to the cheers of children at a Christmas pageant/party. For a brief instance, one forgets that Lavery is with the children. Momentarily, he seems to have entered a purer realm of existence. How can one describe this moment? It is beyond words - ineffable. It is the supreme moment in the ambience: it is the state of being "on stage", and enjoying it most thoroughly.

Lavery was captivating in commercials. He is likewise captivating on film.

With the exception of some exposure problems, the film is technically on a high, even glossy, level.

The editing is especially effective.

Jaan Pill

André Thibault's

I'm Not Alone

d. André Thibault, **sc.** researched by Thibault, **ph.** André Thibault and Gordon Tough, **sd.** Gordon Tough, **ed.** Marsha Sellick, **m.** Daniel Lacasse, **l.p.** Barb Collins-Williams and Pat Armour, **p.** Gordon Tough, 1975, Colour, 16mm, **running time:** 10 minutes, **dist.** Tough or Thibault, 192 Indian Grove, Toronto, M6P 2H2.



Gordon Tough and André Thibault, directors

André Thibault and Gordon Tough set out originally to make an hour length documentary on single parents, but at the point at which all potential material was shot and assembled, they were advised (and well so) to opt for a series of shorter, more manageable films.

The first in this series, **I'm Not Alone**, is now finished and based on the success of this one, the others will be finished. They will focus on single fathers, welfare mothers, women involved with Mother Load Union, Interval House and Wages for Housework, and a composite group discussing the social and sexual realities of the single parent. As the one finished film stands, it is too brief (at 10 minutes) to give adequate voice to the issues raised by the two middle class women who are its centre.

I'm Not Alone indeed has problems of many sorts - its music, which distracts from it, its editing, which is often gratuitous, and again its brevity, but its weaknesses are by no means limitations, and by virtue of their subject the remaining films in the series should be completed. The value of these kinds of films (modeled on the National Film Board's Working Women's films) is immense in the practical contexts in which single parents learn daily and repeatedly how to survive in a role which is often lent only carpetbagger status in this society. The value of short films in instances like this is not to be taken lightly and it would appear that in context of the unfinished films, Thibault and Tough have weighted their material appropriately.

Joyce Rock

The Edge

Written, produced and directed by the inmates of Guelph correctional Centre; Norm Banville, Harvey Green, Tony Guiliani, Rick Jeanvenne, Seward MacDonald, Jerry Miller, Jacques Robert, - with Margot Cronis and Clarke Mackey.

Last summer, Clarke Mackey and Margot Cronis placed a camera, a recorder, a Moviola and themselves at the disposal of the inmates of the Guelph Correctional Center. The result was **The Edge**, a strange and awkward film.

The Edge, written, directed, and performed by the inmates of Guelph, attempts to answer the question of why they are in prison.

The message is simple but incomplete. **The Edge** suggests that the media sets standards of success which they, the inmates, are economically unable to achieve. However, family and society put pressure on them to achieve these standards and therefore they must turn to crime.

Unfortunately **The Edge** does not explain why others in similar positions did not turn to crime.

In the performance this film is Brechtian. One never forgets that one is watching inmates and not actors. We are further reminded of this by certain esoteric 'inner-world' sequences that probably only other inmates are able to comprehend.

One detracting thing in the film is its professional polish. Mackey and Cronis worked closely with the prisoners. Although the subject is obviously the inmates', its form of expression is Mackey's and Cronis' to a great extent. The film would have been more interesting had the inmates used their own form. The professional finish of **The Edge** tends to draw away from the film's uniqueness.

The Edge is a very interesting self-portrait by a group of inmates. Although its message might be incomplete from our point of view, from that of the prisoners, it expresses all the feelings they have about the reasons for their imprisonment.

The Edge is in black and white and is about twenty minutes long. It's written, produced and directed by Norm Banville, Harvey Green, Tony Guiliani, Rick Jeanvenne, Seward MacDonald, Jerry Miller, Jacques Robert, inmates at the Guelph Correctional Center, with Margot Cronis and Clarke Mackey.

At the moment the film is available from Clarke Mackey.

Peter Wronski

RECORD REVIEWS

*Cinema Canada's record column begins without any brand new releases to consider but one must start somewhere! Sound track albums are an important mark of any national industry's identity and, in case you hadn't noticed, Canada does have some, including **The Act of the Heart, The Violin and Homer**. The two discs briefly reviewed here are still current in the catalogue and they make attractive listening, especially the first.*

The Hard Part Begins

A & M Records SP 9016.

Songs and instrumentals written by Cliff Carrol, Zeke Sheppard, L. Dubinsky, J. & I. Guenther and others. Performed by Zeke Sheppard (dubbing Donnelly Rhodes as "King"), Louise Rockwood and Cliff Carrol, with backing.

Country ballads and blues, archetypically plangent and moody, plus some lively instrumentals combine to form an evocative memento of a distinguished film. The characters in the story, making a not very glamorous living in the small towns and one-night stands of Ontario, were not sup-

posed to be terribly good performers. The album glosses this seediness somewhat, being quite professional enough for agreeable listening, but something of the sad unrealised dreams of the "big time" comes through as well. Excellent engineering and surfaces; suitably long on bass.

My Pleasure is My Business

Daffodil Records DAF 10051

Music written and sung by Tom Cochrane. Featuring Dave Cooper, Deane Cameron and Rick Nickerson (guitars and percussion).

Rather than as a souvenir of an easily forgettable film, this derivative but lively album needs to stand on its own. The main theme ("Gabrielle", alias Xaviera Hollander) is as good as most these days, while the lengthy two-part "Turn Back" is rather better than that. It's from the extended (you should pardon the expression) party sequence and has an energetic if scarcely subtle vitality. Technically, another fine job; Canuck pop music recording seems in good hands.

Clive Denton

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ADVERTISING INDEX

All Canadian Answering Service	p. 49
Bellevue Pathé	p. 43
Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution Centre	p. 41
Canadian Motion Picture Equipment Rentals Ltd.	p. 21
Cine Books	p. 21
Cinema Productions	p. 42
Insurevest	p. 49
International Index to Film Periodicals	p. 37
MIFED	p. 2
Quinn and Mirrophonic Labs	p. 52
Wm. F. White	p. 51