

REVERB

We Stink

Your article *AMPIA vs ACCESS* has just reeked my desk.

Sincerely,

Larry T. Shorter
President
ACCESS-Alberta

Introducing Jean Oser

I have come to look forward to reading John Hofsess' reviews and articles and "Yorkton Shorts" (*Cinema Canada* no. 24) was certainly no exception. After reading his tongue-in-cheek impressions of the Yorkton International Film Festival I had no doubts that the man truly enjoyed himself and that he was suitably impressed by Yorkton's biennial "film bath".

However, with all due respect to Mr. Hofsess, I must question his *unqualified* description of a very dear and personal friend of mine, Mr. Jean Oser, as "a film historian and windbag". I would venture to say that Grant McLean, Micheline Lanctot and John Hofsess are all fairly well known names among *Cinema Canada* readers and the Canadian film industry in general. Unfortunately, such is not the case with Jean Oser and it seems to me callously unfair to refer to a man as a "windbag" without any attempt whatsoever at explanation. After all, windbag is a fairly derogatory term to most people and one which is perfectly capable of creating wrong impressions.

Therefore, I wish to introduce Jean to *Cinema Canada* readers and give him, in small part, a measure of the recognition he deserves.

Jean Oser began his film career as an editor in Germany in 1928. He spent his first seven years in the industry working for the famous German director G.W. Pabst, editing such classics as *Kamaradschaft*, *Three Penny Opera* and *Don Quixote*. Before Hitler's Nazis took power Jean left Germany and moved to New York. During W.W. II he joined the United States Army as a director and editor creating information and training films for the troops such as *How to Dig a Foxhole* and *The Proper Method of Building a Latrine*. If you don't believe me ask him; he'll tell you how

they used rubber "stools" so they wouldn't have to handle the real thing.

After the war, and before he moved to Regina, Saskatchewan to teach, Oser worked on numerous documentary, promotional and public relations pictures. Most notable among these were the syndicated television shows *The Valiant Years* on Churchill, the Harry Truman series and *F.D.R.* on Franklin Roosevelt. During this period Jean directed a series of seven shorts for 20th Century Fox, one of which was *The Light in the Window* on the Dutch painter Jan Vermeer. In 1952 *The Light in the Window* took first prize at the Venice Film Festival and in 1953, an Academy Award.

Jean Oser came to the University of Regina in 1970 to teach film but he did more than teach - he started a movement. In the six short years that Jean has been in Saskatchewan his boundless energy and enthusiasm has been responsible for a tremendous upsurge of film awareness by various government departments, cultural groups and arts societies. Indeed, it was Jean's presence as a member of the Saskatchewan Arts Board which was instrumental in convincing the Board once and for all that film *was* in fact an *art!* No small potatoes in a province which has traditionally considered all forms of art as frivolous at best, an effeminate hobby at worst.

Jean Oser teaches film in Regina, yes, but his students leave his classes with something more than an idea of how to express themselves with film. They leave with a sense of "there was a beginning"; they feel the roots and history of our industry because Jean Oser and film grew up together.

We who know and love Jean consider him to be a walking encyclopedia on film and for that reason he most definitely is a film historian. But he's a real one - not some guy who "studied" film - but a man who has *lived* it and he has every right to be an authority on the subject.

In March 1975, Mr. Oser received the Venice Art Gold Medal for his outstanding contributions to international film and, Mr. Hofsess, as Jean himself might say, "That easy it is not."

Norman Sawchyn

Critical encouragement

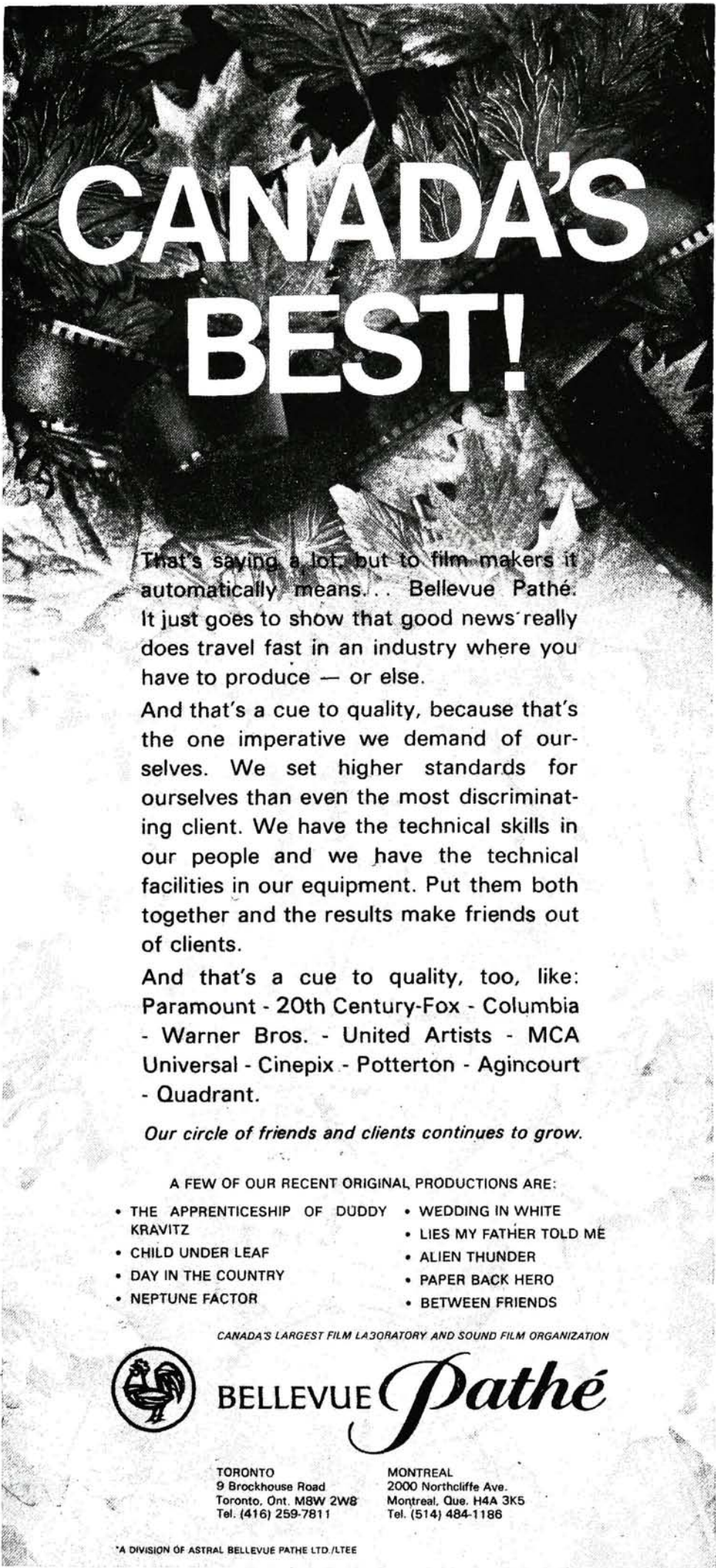
Please advise me as to the state of my subscription to *Cinema Canada*...

While I'm writing I may as well mention how much I dislike your covers. I am a staunch supporter of your magazine and I have followed its development closely. I can only remember one cover that interested me (a still from Boon Collins' *Sally Feelgood* (sic) & Co.) and even then there wasn't a decent story to go with it. I appreciate your economic situation but staying with your present format surely you can acquire interesting stills from the most promising films and write a comprehensive story that justifies your hopes for the film of the month. In my opinion, there should have been a "cover story" for **Duddy Kravitz** as well as the interviews with Ted Kotcheff & John Kemeny and follow-up progress reports. I would like to see it brought home to readers that this is a world class film (or it should have been). The same treatment was due **Lies My Father Told Me**, **Mon Oncle Antoine**, **The Rowdyman**, **Black Christmas**, **Paperback Hero**, **The Pyx**, etc. - so what if some of the stars aren't Canadian.

I would also like to see more detailed coverage of non-Canadian status films that have successfully employed Canadian crews and locations. Look for great things from **Buffalo Bill and the Indians** in June! What about **Russian Roulette**, **Class of 44**, **Paper Chase**, **The Last Detail**, **McCabe & Mrs. Miller**, **Prime Cut**, **Little Big Man**, **The Bears and I**, **Mustang Country**, **Christina**, **The Groundstar Conspiracy** and some of the made-for-TV movies. A little borrowed glamour never hurt the industry or the publishing business.

And while I'm at it... How about interviewing our top D.O.P.s like Marc Champion on the **Breaking Point** set or Reg Morris on **Food of the Gods** (or the **Second Wind** set or Doug McKay on **The Keeper** set, etc.)?

I know that there have been some good articles in the past, that the magazine is growing and that your covers will improve (inevitably), so read this letter as encouragement not criticism. Celebrate our successes and brush over the disasters.



CANADA'S BEST!

That's saying a lot, but to film-makers it automatically means... Bellevue Pathé. It just goes to show that good news really does travel fast in an industry where you have to produce — or else.

And that's a cue to quality, because that's the one imperative we demand of ourselves. We set higher standards for ourselves than even the most discriminating client. We have the technical skills in our people and we have the technical facilities in our equipment. Put them both together and the results make friends out of clients.

And that's a cue to quality, too, like: Paramount - 20th Century-Fox - Columbia - Warner Bros. - United Artists - MCA Universal - Cinepix - Potterton - Agincourt - Quadrant.

Our circle of friends and clients continues to grow.

A FEW OF OUR RECENT ORIGINAL PRODUCTIONS ARE:

- THE APPRENTICESHIP OF DUDDY KRAVITZ
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- LIES MY FATHER TOLD ME
- DAY IN THE COUNTRY
- ALIEN THUNDER
- NEPTUNE FACTOR
- PAPER BACK HERO
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I want to know how a good picture could have been made better rather than why a turkey was ever made at all. The "Great Canadian Internationally Marketable Film" has come and gone already and we didn't even notice.

I am very pleased with the Feature Film Production Guide in no. 24 and I'm looking for that feature to be repeated frequently. Film News will be more comprehensive and current in the future, I'm sure.

Keep up the good work and grow with a growing industry.

John Wardlow

Antipathetic VTR

I opened **Cinema Canada** no. 25 to a page headed *Film News* only to discover the CBC is producing eight dramas in Winnipeg. Good news for some prairie crews. Reading on, Derek Goodwin heads the projects. Len Klady is all mixed up or sadly misinformed.

Derek Goodwin and his dramas are welcome additions to the Winnipeg production scene. However they are not all film dramas. Six are VTR.

The one half-hour film drama is being directed by Don S. Williams of Winnipeg, for Mr. Goodwin, producer. Two other one-hour film dramas will be produced and directed by Don S. Williams.

So the correct story is... three film dramas, one produced by Derek Goodwin, rather than "all but one" as Mr. Klady puts it. The others are being produced by Mr. Williams who has produced more local film drama than anyone in Manitoba. He has made more than twenty such films here on the prairies.

So, why are we talking up Video Tape Recording in **Cinema Canada**, especially under the title of *Film News*?

Don Hunter
Vice-President
Winnipeg Chapter C.S.C.

Erratum

In last month's Special Events, the credit for Executive Producer of **Home Movies** was omitted. Credit goes to George Robertson.
(continued p. 57)