

# REVERB

## Deliberate Eavesdropping

It was with considerable interest that I recently read John Hofsess's report (*Cinema Canada* no. 24) of Don Obe's report of a conversation Obe overheard at Joe Bird's restaurant in Toronto between Robert Fulford and some unidentified person. You will understand my interest when I tell you I was the other person. I hope, therefore, you will permit me a few remarks.

First, I think you should be aware that I suffer from an irritable colon. One of the results of that condition is that I never eat with people who are loud. Doing so upsets my stomach. My children have had to learn to eat quietly. We don't keep a dog because it might bark during meals. As a matter of principle, I eat out only with softspoken people. That's why I occasionally permit Bob Fulford to join me over lunch; he's softspoken. I myself am even more soft-spoken. People frequently have to lean forward to catch the pearls of wisdom that drop from my lips. Given all of this, it seems to me unlikely that Obe could have "overheard" our conversation. What seems more likely is that he deliberately eavesdropped on it.

Second, Obe isn't a very good reporter. The Hofsess/Obe description of our conversation attributes to Fulford some things that I in fact said (let's give credit where credit is due), and at least one thing that I'm reasonably certain neither of us said. It was I who raised the question of Hofsess's competence as a book and film reviewer. I remember mentioning a *Maclean's* film column in which Hofsess argued that Canadian filmmakers had always been behind the times. His prime example of this was that as late as 1933, years after the rest of the world was making sound movies, Canada was still producing silent films such as *Carry On Sergeant!* (The fact is, *Carry On Sergeant!* was made in 1927-28 when silent films were still being made everywhere.)

What I'm reasonably certain neither of us said is that Hofsess's work is "a complete embarrassment" and that it was "completely incomprehensible... how any of it ever got published." In my own case, although I don't particularly like Hofsess's work as a critic, I think he's written some first-rate profiles - most recently a piece on track steward John Damien in *Weekend Magazine*.

Third, I'd like to comment on the question of the confidentiality of the material contained in the film script. Hofsess wrote the script because he wanted to make an autobiographical film - a film about John Hofsess that would be seen by hundreds of thousands of people. To complain that two people over lunch were discussing "the intensely personal information" to be contained in the film seems ludicrous.

**Morris Wolfe**

## Long-Overdue Publicity

We're all most grateful to Natalie Edwards for giving our *Canadian Filmmakers Series* some long-overdue publicity in her article *It's film all right, but is it art?* in your last issue. She is correct in assuming that the shorter package this year represents about what we can afford to back consistently for a long-term program. After bookings lasting nearly a year we hope the films, as an archive at the National Gallery, will prove useful to filmmakers and historians of film in the future.

We have noted her criticisms too - titles clearer, longer leaders between films and more information on the filmmakers - but should explain that the films come to us complete and we have no practical way of arranging changes with the filmmaker (maybe some of them will have read the article and heeded the good advice) and that we have a devil of a time getting any information of a biographical sort from any filmmaker.

**Richard Graburn**

Head  
National Program  
The National Gallery of Canada

## Your Decimal Is Showing

*The following letter was addressed to Robert Rouveroy, c.s.c., author of the Rough Cut column in issue no. 26.*

Dear Bob:

Thank you for your column "Rough Cut"; to me it is entertainment and information under one heading. I've got only one problem. As you know, I am in the service business and make my living repairing cameras and lenses. I call myself a specialist on zoom lenses and quite a few cameramen can verify this. But you are writing about tolerances on the Canon zoom of 0.0015 mm. Sorry, I have to close my shop because my collimeter reads only 0.01 mm and did not create any problem up till now. But if some guy walks into the shop and wants a calibration of 0.0015 I have to pass and will send him to you. Furthermore, I want to know where you buy your gels. If they are 0.01 mm thick you should not have any problem using them behind the lens because the most common camera calibration is minus 0.01. Anyway, I think your decimal point slipped a little bit to the left side and you will correct this in the next edition of *Cinema Canada*. Regarding the C-mount, I have to come down on you as well. This little screw mount has the reputation of being the most positive locking device for optical systems. It is self-centering, which keeps your zoom

lens tracking properly; it is to a degree self-cleaning, done by rotating mounting process, and when designed heavy enough nearly non-destructible. Other camera manufacturers have invented some fancy snap locks and bayonet locks, where you spend more time keeping them clean than shooting. So don't knock the screw - it is still the best fastener! But you can get bad and good screws and that's where the problem starts. Keep your C-mount well maintained on your zoom lens and use a camera with a solid front - forget about a turret; it is a compromise - then you will find out that you don't need a beautiful zoom support.

On zoom lenses in general, you can say they are not as good as prime lenses but if you spend the money you can get one trimmed out that you cannot see the difference between prime and zoom lens on a blowup. If you don't believe me, check with Reg Morris! I trimmed his a long time ago and he is still happy with it.

Keep up the good spirit; I enjoy your articles and I hope I will be able to jump on your back from time to time.

**Gerd Kurz**

### Rouveroy replies:

*... having been brought up on the metric system I'm deeply ashamed to admit I goofed a decimal point. I do stand by my observations on the C-mount, however. There is a difference between theoretical tolerances and conditions and the practical experience. To paraphrase Gurd's declarations on the merits of good and bad screws, a good C-mount screw can be very good, but a bad screw is horrid. Now for the percentage point...*

### Cannes Special

*This issue of Cinema Canada is a special one, destined for distribution at the Cannes Film Festival. It is not a representative issue, and many alterations have been made. Reverb has been cut by two pages, and Historical Notes, Tech News and Rough Cut have all been removed, as have the Book Reviews. Readers will find all these sections back again in issue no. 29.*

*The Editors*

### Erratum

Our apologies to Joan Irving, who did not receive credit as the author of the film review *The Working Class on Film* which appeared in issue no. 27.

- ✓  **BOLEX** *16mm cameras and projectors*
- ✓  **CHILES** *power belts*
- ✓  **ECLAIR INTERNATIONAL** *16mm and 35mm cameras*
- ✓  **LEE FILTERS** *lighting control media*
- ✓  **MAGNASYNC** *16mm and 35mm studio recording equipment*
- ✓  **MOVIOLA** *16mm and 35mm editing equipment*
- ✓  **PYRAL** *recording tapes*
- ✓  **RDS** *studio lighting equipment*
- ✓  **STELLAVOX** *quarter inch recorders*

SERVICED AND SOLD BY

 **CARSEN**

... for over 28 years an integral part of the Canadian photographic industry.

*Plus* OLYMPUS • EUMIG • ACME-LITE  
• SEKONIC *and many others*

For technical information, catalogue, demonstration and prices, contact the

 **PROFESSIONAL DIVISION**  
**W. CARSEN CO. LTD.**

31 SCARSDALE ROAD • DON MILLS • ONTARIO • CANADA M3B 2R2  
TORONTO 444-1155 MONTREAL 488-0917