

TIDBITS ABOUT ANIMATORS

First, we present **Willy Ashworth**, who used to be Bill Reed, but found everybody was called Bill Reed, so now he's Willy Ashworth.

The story begins with the "French Fiasco." OECA - Ontario Educational Communication Authority - was starting a big-budget French-language series, asked quotes from local production houses. Didn't like prices, went to Los Angeles. Local animators found out, started agitating.

OECA, trying to do right thing, decided from now on it'll take bids on absolutely everything - and what they decided to tender at that point was a contract already awarded verbally to a freelancer - Willy Ashworth - who had just finished several weeks' preparation for a new "Readalong" series, which he'd also worked on last year.

At June 1 meeting with OECA, other production houses find out Willy had a handshake agreement already, and refuse to bid. Willy, along with Patsy Crudden (who also worked on the project last year), gets the job.

And that's also how the Canadian Animation Producers Association (tentative title) had its start. It consists of Toronto animation producers, with Montreal and Ottawa representatives so far, and aims to be Canada-wide.

"I've only been in the industry five years now," Willy says, "and I've never known anything quite like it. It was encouraging. I think it's good for the industry. I think we can help each other."

Encouraged by the result of sitting down together and dealing with OECA as a united group, the producers are now looking to other areas.

"We generally are overlooked in all negotiations between guild and craft people and other professional organizations," as **Al Guest** of Rainbow Productions explains. "Even the Council of Canadian Filmmakers, in their dealings with the federal and provincial governments, forget about the animators. Because they consider us to be filmmakers like them - which to some extent is true, but we have special problems, which they don't know because they're not in our business."

Got some interesting comments from **Scott Didlake** at the Ontario College of Art about the super-8 festival in Toronto in April. The best of the animation is now on videotape, for anyone who wants to see it. Some of the best was done by 12-year-olds (there were no age categories). He also mentioned Eugene Federenko, who taught animation to children during the recent animation festival at the Art Gallery of Ontario.

While on the topic - **Peter Jones** of the Film Board office in Vancouver mentions an NFB film made there with children as animators - with NFB animators "hovering around and being helpful but not interfering with the creative process."



Dennis Pike
drawing Jaan Pill

The Cape Dorset project out of the same office, with workshops set up for young Eskimo filmmakers, also comes to mind. Really excellent work - a purity of vision, a clarity. One of the shorts won a prize at Zagreb in 1974.

With his Indian legend animation series for a producer in L.A. just about wrapped up, Toronto freelancer **Dennis Pike** is working on two live-action film projects. One involves Canadian history. With the American bicentennial celebrations comes a heavy media onslaught promoting the popular American version of the history of the North American continent:

"If we're not careful we're going to find the history of the period 200 years ago crystallize into the mold that it's been forced into this year.

"Quebec as we see it today is a product of the American war for independence. All the problems that are built into Quebec are there as a direct result of the war and the Loyalist migration northward."

Also in the works is a live-action Pike film about Eskimo and Inuit land claims in northern Canada.

Interesting to talk to freelancer Pike about the Film Board. Norman McLaren, he comments, is a national

monument. That's good, he says. On the other hand, work in industry has been the same or almost the same as what he's done, but one never gets the two years to polish it: "In fact they're just ordinary people with a lot of time and a lot of money to polish the hell out of stuff. And of course you haven't got that commercially." (You'd accept second or third rough and use it. At Board you'd keep on refining till happy.)

That's where their reputation is, says Pike: the polish. Great people. "But it's like the protection you get from being in a monastery.

"After a while the big wheels who develop through the Film Board hierarchy appear to the rest of the world almost as cardinals. They've all got red robes."

Seems the February 1976 issue of **Millimeter** really has become a collector's item ... **Cine Books** reports that its original stock sold out completely. They reordered and that's all sold out too. "Anything on animation goes very quickly."

Another treat is the article on Oskar Fischinger by William Moritz in **Film Culture**, Nos. 58-60, 1974. Fischinger, whose free-flowing synchrony of music and visual imagery in a short set to Brahms's Hungarian Dance No. 5 had a significant influence on the development of Norman McLaren as an animator, was fascinated with natural medicine, experimented with diets, moon cycles, magnetic earth currents. His work on "synthetic sound" and "sounding images" in the '30s was a forerunner of what is now called concrete and electronic music. Few understood what he was getting at till he spoke about his concepts to Edgar Varese and John Cage in the '40s, and they were able to exploit them in their work. (And John Cage, you remember, said that "Everything we do is music. Everywhere is the best seat.")

And now a word from **Jim McKay** of Film Design. Tell me, Jim, what do you think about the way animation houses pop up and disappear over the years?

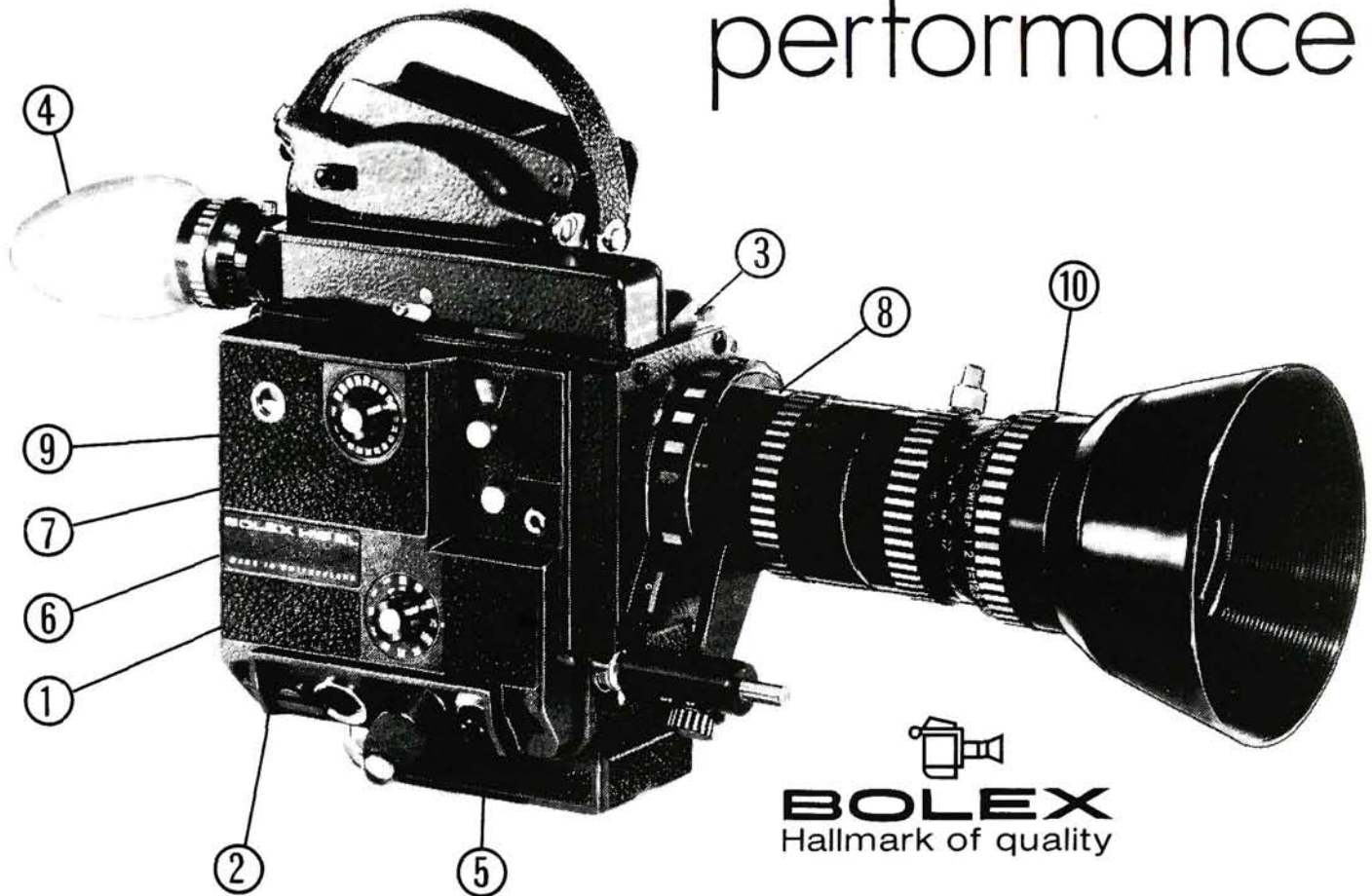
"Well, my impression is that animators are like migrant fruit pickers. They go where the action is.

"I was always amazed when I would go to New York and meet people, and find out where they worked and for what studios they worked, and then I'd go back a year or two later to find out half the studios didn't exist anymore. But the people were still there, working under different names and in different combinations. It all sounds like animation is insecure - but then I'm suspicious of security as an end.

"I guess I like the challenge. To be able to adapt and change to a situation is what makes life interesting."

Jaan Pill

Experience total camera performance



① Motor may be crystal controlled for wireless sync sound. Speeds from 10 to 50 fps forward and reverse, controlled by solid state electronics. Automatic slating with sync-pulse generator. ② Rechargeable battery that adds a mere 13 oz. to the weight and attaches right to the camera. ③ Technologically, the most advanced through-the-lens metering system. The silicon cell has no memory. So it reacts instantly, responds uniformly to all colors and is practically unaffected by temperature changes. Rugged, accurate and reliable. ④ Light-emitting diodes indicate correct exposure in bright 13X reflex finder. The completely electronic system has no mechanical parts or moving needles that can fail due to rough handling. Lighted diodes are always visible even in dim light. ⑤ Electro-magnetic control for instant start and stop with shutter in closed position. ⑥ Electronically controlled single frame capability assures the kind of accuracy and reliability found only in specially built animation units. ⑦ Superb picture steadiness to satisfy the demands of the most discriminating pro. ⑧ The lens mount is so rugged and well-engineered you can safely carry the camera by the lens. ⑨ Automatic threading and spool ejector for swift change of film. ⑩ Complete line of superb optics: macro, power zoom, lenses with fully automatic exposure control, automatic depth of field scales, automatic diaphragm pre-setting, super fast f/1.1 aperture. • Professional accessories include 400' magazine, matte box, blimp, shoulder brace, u/w housing.

Bolex built the all new H16 EL with every essential feature successful professionals use to create outstanding 16mm commercial films. Yet until now these same pros have had to pay thousands more for these same advantages — without having them all in one camera.

And, with the Bolex EL, a pro can film more easily and get superb results. As a matter of fact, so superb, he can blow up his film to 35mm for theatrical release if need be.

Write for your copy of the full colour brochure and catalogue. Study each feature carefully. Compare the price, quality and features of the H16 EL with any other 16mm available. Get your very own Bolex, then go out and experience total camera performance.

**THE ALL NEW
BOLEX
ELECTRONIC
» H16EL «**