

The dreams...ordeals... triumphs- told by the people who lived them.

AUGUST
1986

The AUGUST-THROW-IT-TOGETHER-AT-THE-LAST-MINUTE-AND-HOPE-IT-GETS-
TO-THE-MEMBERS-IN-TIME-SUMMER-ISSUE!!!

LIAISON OF
INDEPENDENT
FILMMAKERS OF
TORONTO

245 Adelaide Street West
Suite 505
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M5V 1R5
416-596-8223

2 ALL MEMBERS & friendz:

The Board of Directors met on August 13 to discuss the purchasing of new equipment and the Board elections coming up at the September meeting. As we said in the July issue, several members of the present board will not be looking to serve a second term, and we are seeking new members to be a part of the new board. Anyone interested should send a note to the office here, we'll mention this again in the September issue, and look forward to a big turnout in September for said elections. As this is basically a thankless job, we've added some perks to get people interested. If you are a member of the Board, you will now receive an automatic Full Membership in LIFT for the duration of your service, as well as \$300.00 in LIFT theoretical money to be used against equipment rentals. But let me warn you you are definitely going to earn those LIFT bucks if you get on the Board. There's lots of hours involved - the present members meet about once every two weeks for two or three hours, not to mention tons of hours on your individual projects.

As far as the new equipment goes, Keith Dunnett is busy pricing various equipment that we should be buying within the next month including a shotgun mike, camera filters, an O'connor 50 tripod and head, another Nagra, and other bits and pieces. As well, the National Film Board is going to lend us, for an indefinite long term, some more lights and mikes, an Eclair camera, a couple of splicers, and a reel-to-reel taperecorder. Keith also wants to purchase a Mag Transfer machine. We did have a lead on one, the person has since vanished off the face of the earth, so if you know of any good, used machines, give Keith a call @ 844-6389. Keith is also working on getting us \$10,000.00 from Wintario. If successful, this money will be used to buy even more lights and some more post-production equipment.

HOW I MADE "BARABA"

Herman Melville's short story "The Scrivner" intrigued me the moment I read it. There was something unique about it's handling of characters and themes which seemed quite advanced for it's time (as it predated Kafka by about 40 years). I was taken with the story's parable style which had at it's centre an enigmatic character whom we learn nothing about except that he is quite adept at saying "I would prefer not to." But what a beautiful character to act as a means of bringing out characteristics in the straight-laced Wall St. lawyer and narrator, especially when the power struggle ensues between passive disobedience and conventional authoritative measures. At once it is both absurd and disturbing. A piquant delight. In other words, I had to make it into a movie.

I wrote a screenplay, BARABA, (which won the Norma Epstein Creative Writing Award and egged me onward) modernized the characters and made it a contemporary setting, saved up three thousand dollars, cast and crewed up and began shooting at Hart House, which acted as my main locale.

"...stay cool is still the main rule." - Bryan Ferry.

"...don't play yourself for a fool." - Bryan Ferry.



All the time while making the film I was conscious that I wanted to do something different, to avoid naturalistic acting, conversation and lighting, to avoid the easy ways out. Also to be avoided was the conventional ending which explains everything and leaves the audience satisfied; in it's place was a completely open ending which explains nothing (which I think is more true to life anyhow). The intention being that the audience would be thrown back on what proceeded and attempt to discern for themselves some explanation. Whether I have succeeded in my attempt - I don't know.

All I know, is there is a price to be paid for being unconventional. If you are ever going to define your own style you may have to walk this road for a while. You may even get your fingers burned. I burned more than my fingers, I even burned my big toe. But the flesh heals - eventually.

---Aaron V. Shuster

(P.S. Aaron will be showing BARABA at the meeting on August 25, and if we're lucky, he might even show us his toes.)

B E T H E R E & B E S Q U A R E O R B E W A R E ! ! !

The July monthly meeting/screening was great! We showed four films from the crazed people at the Newfoundland Indie Filmmakers' Co-op on a hot night here, lots of new faces, and thanks to Neil St. Clair for running the projector for the night. We also showed the WORLD PREMIERE of Keith Hlady's 'THERE IS A RALLY', picked up from the lab a half-hour previous to it's screening, and it too got a great reaction. Anyways... This is what we've got planned for the next meeting on Aug 25th...

NEW HOT SHORTS

Monthly Meeting/Screening: Mon., August 25, 7:00 Sharp
@ the LIFT space, 345 Adelaide St. West, #505...

Some recently completed shorts by LIFT members. The filmmakers will be present to discuss their films. THE STORYTELLERS, 28 minutes, by Bruce Moffitt and Scott Gilmore, is about four people who tell stories in a highly ritualized format. The story they tell is about a stage manager who house-sits for people while they are away, and who takes on the personalities of the owners of the houses.

A STRANGER IN MY OWN LAND, 11 minutes, by Michelle Sirois, is a documentary about a Salvadorean refugee and the events that force his family to flee from El Salvador. Produced in co-op w/Women's Workshop @NFB. BARABA, 26 minutes, by Aaron Shuster (see article).

Annette Mangaard will also be screening a short this night, and, as always, there will be beer, beer, beer.



GONZO SCREENINGS @ THE FESTIVAL OF FESTIVALS

Did you get your film turned down by the Festival of Festivals this year? Do you still want to show it at the Festival? Phone Colin at the office and find out about the GONZO SCREENINGS. Basically what we're going to do is show our films on the sidewalks and streets near this year's venues for the Festival. A cube van set up with a screen on one side of the street, a van with a roof-rack and Honda generator on the other side, start the projector, and presto! we're part of the Festival! We don't want to appear to be bitter or upset that our films were rejected (a lot of LIFT films are officially part of the Fest this year), we just want our films shown period, and these Gonzo Screenings are a fun way of doing it. This was done by Bruce MacDonald and others from LIFT a few years back, and from all accounts it was a great success. They simply set up a screen and projector in front of the University Theatre and attracted the attention of about 50 people, one irate University Theatre manager, and two policemen, who reluctantly had to ask Bruce to shut down. They even got a 10 minute spot on CITY-TV and an interview with...JEANNIE BEKKER!!!!!! We can't name names but we have an insider who ...gee, maybe I shouldn't even mention this part...uh... who works for the Fest, or with people at the Fest, or all of the above or none of the above (I don't want to get this person in trouble) who is going to make sure that all of the invited press attending the Fest gets the Gonzo press release as well as all the exciting news about the JACK LEMMON film premiering there this year. Again I want to stress that this is not a platform for politicking or whining, but a light-hearted jab at the Fest, and it should be a lot of fun. Our honorary patron saints for this event are St. Groucho (Marx) and St. Hunter (S. Thompson). If you are interested in taking part or helping or showing your films, give me a call at the office.

---Colin Brunton

FESTIVAL OF FESTIVALS UPDATE

At the last possible minute a number of LIFT members' films have been included in this year's Festival of Festival: Jeremy Podeswa's NION IN THE CABARET DE LA VITA, Keith Hlady's THERE IS A RALLY, Patricia Rozema's URBAN GRAFFITI, and Annette Mangaard's HER SOIL IS GOLD. This film was originally shot on Super-Eight, then Annette optically printed it onto 16mm film, and will be shown at the Cumberland 3 on September 10 @ 7:00 p.m. It features an original soundtrack by THE PALACE AT FOUR A.M. Annette, depending on the availability of prints, may bring one of her earlier films to the meeting on Monday. Congratulations to all LIFT members who are now a part of the Festival this year.....

In addition to Atom Egoyan's MEN: A PASSION PLAYGROUND & Bruce MacDonald's KNOCK! KNOCK!

Films included so far in the GONZO SCREENINGS include Colin's A TRIP AROUND LAKE ONTARIO, Rob Shoub's A WOMAN AND HER DOG, Derek Roger's MY REUVEN, Bruce Moffitt's THE STORYTELLERS, and Michelle Sirois' A STRANGER IN MY OWN LAND. The only criteria for being involved is that you are a member (affillite, associate or full) of LIFT, have been turned down for the fest in the last two years, your film doesn't contain too much foul language, and you have a slight trace of subversive/anarchist spirit in you.

NOTE: I just noticed a real bad typo, a whole word wrong - URBAN GRAFFITI is really called URBAN MENACE. This was Patricia Rozema's first film, it's three minutes long, and Alexander Raffae is listed as "the crew"

The Canada Council

Please let us know when exactly you plan to stage your "gonzo" screenings. We'll pretend we are in the "huge line-up" and heckle you"

Sincerely,

Françoise Picard
Film and Holography Officer

dreams...



"...when the going gets weird, the weird turn pro."
- Dr. Hunter S. Thompson.

HOW I MADE & SOLD THE LAST POGO.

When punk rock was peaking in Toronto, back in 1978, I worked at the Horseshoe Tavern, and it was there that I made my first film, THE LAST POGO. With no formal schooling apart from a basic course at the old Toronto Filmmakers' Co-op, and thus a total naivety about the whole (expensive) process, I enlisted the aid of filmmaker Patrick Lee, and with his invaluable help I was able to secure a small crew of film students. With a co-signed seven hundred dollar loan I bought some out-dated film stock from the co-op which was traded for new stock at the school where Patrick was teaching. The students were promised a credit for their participation in their first "real" film, and the school even donated a camera and some lights. The film was shot on a 1 1/2 to 1 ration: there is virtually only a couple of hundred feet left over that was used in the film. Bomb Records taped the concert for a live album with an eight-track machine, and I used these recordings in my mix, with a wild track used for a guide track. On the promise that Bomb would pay for my workprint in exchange for a still for the album cover, I talked Film House into releasing the work print, and it was sent to the Arts Councils. I recieved just enough money to complete the film.

Desperate to get it shown on TV, I managed to sell it to CITY-TV three years after it was finished, and got \$500.00 (!) for unlimited airing for three years. Checking the contract I noticed they made a big mistake, and after the first three showings (in as many months) I phoned them to tell them about their screw-up. The film had gotten good response, and CITY renewed for another three years. This time I asked for, and got, \$1,000.00 for three years, and if I ever get this months newsletter finished, I'm going to try and re-sell it to them again. It's played at various clubs in town, and was even booked with a Richard Pryor concert film at Cineplex, a pairing so terrible that it prompted programmer Pat Thompson to tell me that it got "...the most violent, negative reaction of any film ever shown at Cineplex...", a review I've always taken perverse pride in. Being turned down by TVOntario was a blessing in disguise, because in the same month they said they weren't interested in "punk rock" they went ahead and bought a British documentary about "new wave" that turned out to be nothing more than a collection of rock videos, and this persuaded Peter Godard to write a favourable review for the Toronto Star that made the front page of the Entertainment section. The CFMDC has one of the three prints in existence, and the original negative is rotting away at the National Archives in Ottawa. I personally went a few thousand dollars in debt making THE LAST POGO which I have gotten back in the last couple of years, but I completed a film that opened the Arts Council doors to me. I applied for project after project in the years since making the POGO, got turned down year after year, and it wasn't until 1984 that I finally got a production grant for a new film which turned out to be A TRIP AROUND LAKE ONTARIO. I struggled with that for a couple of years, completed it in January of this year, and now I'm gearing up to make my first dramatic film enigmatically titled THE MYSTERIOUS MOON MEN OF CANADA.



...ordeals...

---Colin Branton.

HAVE A NICE TRIP THIS FALL

LAST MINUTE NEWS: The title of Patricia Rozema's film is now called I HAVE HEARD THE MERMAIDS SINGING, and I also want to mention that Patricia is co-producer as well as writer and director...

Patricia Rozema's feature OH, THE THINGS I'VE SEEN is going ahead as planned. With Alexandra Raffe producing, this five week shoot should be starting on September 27, with Doug "Beware of the doug" Koch lensing...Peter Mettler's feature THE TOP OF HIS HEAD will now shoot in the spring of '87 instead of this fall, and Peter will busy himself throughout the winter shooting a variety of projects including a new Jane Siberry video, something for Kay Armatage, and Atom Egoyan's feature FAMILY VIEWING. Atom's feature is going ahead as scheduled with a November start date for three weeks...Clarke Mackay's feature TAKING CARE will begin shooting this fall as well (a real busy fall). Clarke will be shooting on Super-16mm, the better for 35mm blow-ups and transferring to video-tape. Don Haig is the associate producer. Clarke spent this summer directing a couple of THE KIDS OF DeGRASSI STREET shows...Derek Rogers' short drama FAT MAN/THIN MAN will shoot in early October, late September... Colin Brunton plans to start shooting THE MYSTERIOUS MOON MEN OF CANADA in late October...Annette Mangaard is shooting a 1/2 hour comedy this fall as well and is still looking for camera, lighting, and sound personell. Interested parties should contact Anette @ 465-4542, 466-2818. The stills photographer on her shoot, Joanna Nokes, is looking for work on other films, very reasonable rates, phone 461-9670 evenings...Ross Turnbull is getting set to shoot his half-hour drama WHERE BEAUTY LIVES IN MEMORY in October...Ross is still looking for some crew members, phone him at the CFMDC (593-1808)...Janis Lundman is getting ready to shoot a drama called 1,000 YEARS OF ADVICE TO WOMEN... Bruce MacDonald is writing a rock 'n' roll feature film tentatively entitled BLOND ON BLACK, and hopes to roll in the summer of '87. This film will feature the star of Bruce's epic KNOCK! KNOCK!, Daniel Brooks, and a soon to be announced local punk/new wave band...Ron Mann is still plowing ahead on his new documentary feature, working title THE COMIC BOOK FILM, and has captured some pretty interesting people on film for it so far...Rosamund Owen will be shooting the last scenes for her short drama DECEPTIVE PASSION this fall, and may have it cut by the winter. It was shot by Gerald Packer who will also be shooting Derek Rogers' film...Rob Shoub's A WOMAN AND HER DOG, Colin Brunton's A TRIP AROUND LAKE ONTARIO, and Keith Hlady's short doc THERE IS A RALLY will be soon transferred to 1/2 inch video tape with an eye to selling it to various video stores in Toronto. About 3 out of 3 stores along Queen Street West have already expressed an interest in buying copies, and if it turns out to be a success, we'll pass on our connections to anyone else who might want to do this...Hmmm, what else is happening? The Chicago Film Festival has moved it's deadline to September 1. There's a copy of the application form here at the office for you to photocopy if you want to enter...An official reminder that anyone who is a LIFT member can use the office here for auditions, just check first, arrange times, and make sure that you're not bothering anybody cutting, and don't put up little signs in the hallway about the auditions; we got a complaint last week when we did this... For those of you who have read this far in the newsletter (I'm obviously getting hard up for things to write about) if you can tell me who this guy to the right is, I'll buy you a beer at the next meeting. Hint: he is not a member of LIFT, and at the time this picture was taken he had just turned 100 years old.....

..when the going gets tough,
the weak get screwed."
a character in HEAD OFFICE.



NOTE: This newsletter was done in a real rush, so please excuse all of the typos...



HOW I MAKE "KIPPER BREAKFAST"

I'm glad Colin asked me to write this article on KIPPER BREAKFAST because it forced me to sit down and ponder what this film is really about. Entering my fourth year of the Ryerson film program, I face the dilemma of producing the epic thesis film. This film is being made primarily to prove to my parents back in Vancouver that the \$150 a month they send me is not all going to buy drugs.

For the longest time I wanted to make a drama. But most of the other fourth year dramas I saw should have been retired to sound fill, and since I finally realized that I was no more talented than any other student filmmaker, I decided that a drama would be a bad idea. Then for the longest time I wanted to make a documentary. But documentaries aren't very exciting. That leaves animation, but I can't draw very well. The obvious thing was to combine all three: KIPPER BREAKFAST was born.

Since a script doesn't exist yet I can only guess at what KIPPER BREAKFAST will be. Roughly, it will consist of several short documentaries on silly events, connected by a comedy narrative centered on a boy who travels to these events. August saw the filming of two "silly events"; the first event being the International Frog Jumping Contest in Wiarton, the other the Fergus Highland Games. An anecdote: My crew almost mutinied on me when it was discovered the Wiarton hotels had no vacancies and we ended up sleeping in the car at a dusk to dawn drive-in. The OPP officer who woke us up was very understanding. The narrative portion of KB will be filmed this fall.

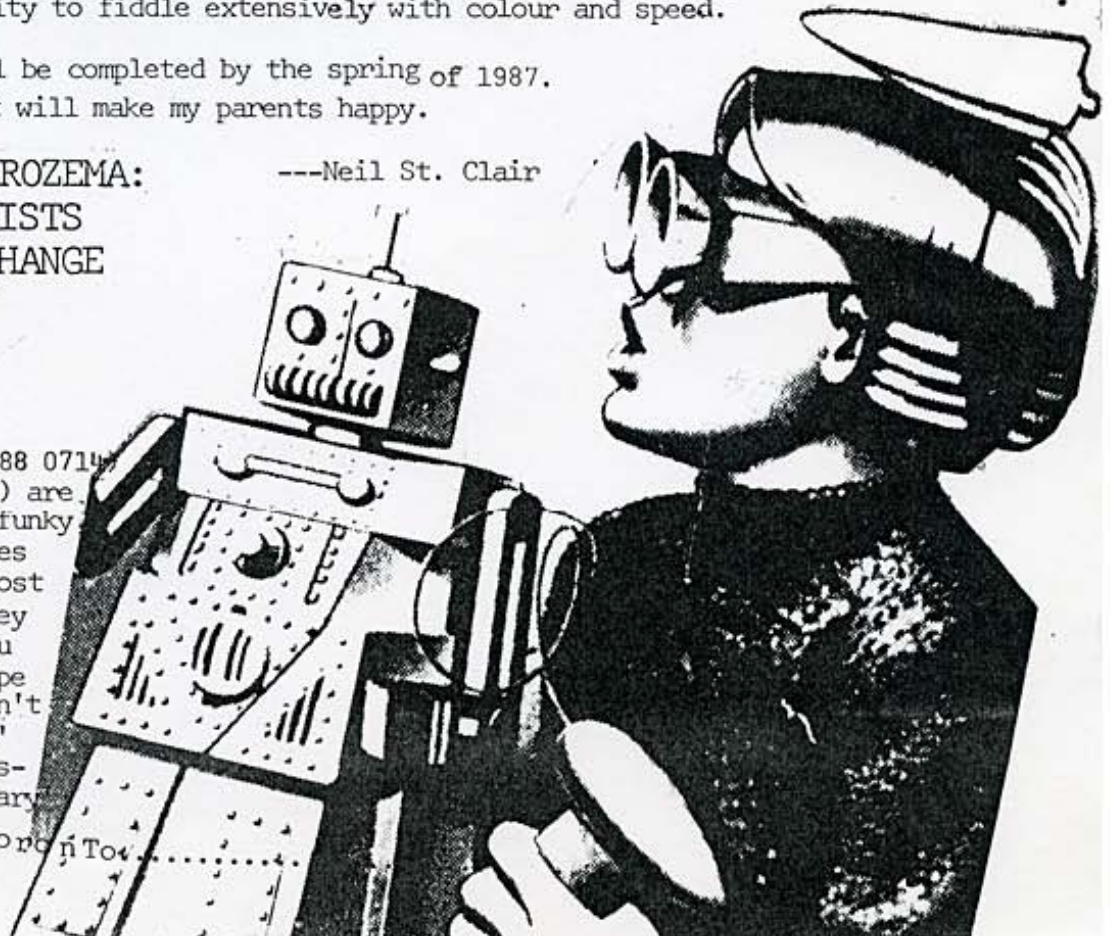
Of some interest to the techies out there is KB's post production. Shot on 16mm film, the negative is being transferred to tape and KIPPER BREAKFAST will then be edited completely on video tape. On the downside, the film will never be seen on the big screen, but the versatility of video post will allow me inexpensive effects and the ability to fiddle extensively with colour and speed.

KIPPER BREAKFAST will be completed by the spring of 1987. At the very least, it will make my parents happy.

A JOKE BY PATRICIA ROZEMA:
"HOW MANY SURREALISTS
DOES IT TAKE TO CHANGE
A LIGHTBULB?"
"A FISH."

---Neil St. Clair

NOTE: Both Derek Rogers (588 0714) and Rosamund Owen (921 9208) are looking for big, spacious, funky rooms/apartments/lofts/spaces to use for filming. It almost goes without saying that they have little money, so if you know of anyplaces, let's hope the big Murrigan crews haven't been there first, eh? Give them a call, or leave a message at L.I.F.T., The Legendary Independent Filmmakers of Toronto.



...too much cheesecake too soon." - Bryan Ferry.

THE FOURTH DAY, Part 1

It comes as no surprise to an independent (or dependent?) filmmaker the number of difficulties which arise in making a film. Putting together a crew, casting, food, etc., are all problems which are often difficult to resolve, due usually to budget limitations. Nevertheless, one way or another we manage to arrive at that frantic stage of "shooting the film". At this stage we are confronted by new problems, or more correctly put, by the above-mentioned problems, along with the new ones.

On our fourth day of filming (ONCE ONE SUMMER, Luis' first feature film) several notable events occurred which have stuck in my mind and seemed worthy of sharing. For example, who would have dreamed that after planning the shoot for January, the heart of winter, that the landscape would be completely devoid of snow? This is exactly what happened to us when we filmed a series of exterior scenes, particularly those we shot on the fourth day. Of course, theoretically one could postpone the shoot or decide to do the interior scenes, but in our case we had already postponed and changed plans so often that Leopoldo Guherrez, the co-producer, pronounced that we should film with whatever weather we were faced with. And so it was decided, since the payment of the rented equipment was not dependent on the meteorological conditions of southern Ontario.

So with a radiant sun shining down, we made our way to an abandoned and desolate area in the east part of the city. It seemed like the perfect spot, not just for its aesthetic characteristics, but also because it would allow the crew to slowly, and with a certain amount of privacy, again begin the filming, which had been interrupted a month before.

Keith Hlady, the cinematographer, picked me up early that morning. We were relaxed and fully confident, since every detail of the shooting had been meticulously planned. When we arrived at the location, the actor and crew were all there, with the exception of John Biggar, the gaffer. Much to our surprise, there was a bustle of activity by people and police cruisers. We quickly discovered that this site had been chosen by someone to commit suicide, and he had been found hanging from a tree. This affected each one of us deeply. I personally tried to imagine the causes or motivations that had led this person, unknown to me, to take his own life. Could it have been love problems? Did he have huge debts? Or was he one of the thousands of people who wander the streets of Toronto with no place to sleep and who prefer to sacrifice themselves rather than continuing to live their lives in the cold. Maybe I will never know his motives, but nevertheless this event made me think that maybe it is worthwhile to show, through film, the crude reality that exists here. This event therefore forced me to consider my own work and to evaluate its purpose critically.

At about 12:30 John arrived and we heard about the reasons for his delayed arrival. These reasons, along with what had already occurred and what would continue to happen constituted a day of shooting that would be difficult to forget. The rest of the story will appear as "Part 2" in the next issue.

---Luis Garcia



TORONTO WOMEN'S WORKSHOP

The Toronto Women's Workshop was formed to provide a means for women in film to upgrade their acquired skills. It was observed that many women working in assistant capacities such as assistant editor, camera or director, often had difficulty moving out of the assistant category and into the job of editor, cinematographer and director. The Workshop was set up to allow women the opportunity to increase their skills, gain further experience and add to their screen credits in their chosen areas of interest and expertise.

The Workshop does this by producing at least two films a year in which members can participate in an upgraded position. The Workshop also acknowledges the difficulty in producing one's first film and has often provided the opportunity for first time directors to initiate and complete their film. Some of the films produced over the past three years have been: The Contest, Bye Bye, and A Stranger in My Own Land. Presently in post-production are: Solo Song, Allan Avenue, and Death for Dinner.

The Workshop requires that women have some kind of background in film as it cannot, and does not, act as a film school. For women who are interested in participating in the Workshop and open meeting to get acquainted with the members and a screening of past films will be held on:

Wednesday, September 3rd at 7:30 p.m.
at the NFB - 65 Adelaide St. E.

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!!!

---Janis Lundman



Faustus Bidgood



CONGRATULATIONS to Mike Jones for ending his ten year struggle to complete 'THE ADVENTURES OF FAUSTUS BIDGOOD'. This feature film from NIFCO has over 180 speaking parts, will play at the Festival of Festivals, and is about, among many other things, a new revolutionary government of Newfoundland, mental insanity, and blackmail. It stars Mike, his brother Andy, Robert Joy, Mary Walsh, Tommy Sexton, Greg Malone, Brian Downey, Maisie Rillie and many others including members of CODCO. A true co-op production right down to ensuring everyone involved shares in the profits. So go see it!!

THEY TRIED TO PLY ME WITH DONUTS, AND OTHER NEWS

As a post-script to my story of how I made and sold THE LAST POGO, I should add that they contacted me first (CITY-TV) after watching it at it's premiere, on a bill with THE GANG OF FOUR and THE VILETONES at the Music Hall (which, by the way, has one of the best arc 16mm projectors in town) on the Danforth. I went down to CITY-TV, and they watched the film again while plying me with - I swear this is true - instant coffee and donuts. They then told me that they had no money whatsoever, but they wanted to show it on THE NEW MUSIC, and when they saw that I looked a bit dissapointed, they added that I would get interviewed by...Jeannie Bekker! I turned them down, and then called them a few years later and got an almost real deal.

---C.B.

Jon Michaelson's new play, DAYS AND NIGHTS WITHIN, opens Aug. 26 at the Nathan Cohen Studio at YPT, and any LIFT members who wish to see it can get in for 1/2 price. I'll give Jon a list of members, just tell him who you are. The play is set in East Berlin in the early 50's, and is a drama utilizing some film projection in some of it's more than 30 scenes. Phone 864 9732 for reservations or 961 1620 if you require more information. Produced by The Mercury Theatre...Some film festival deadlines coming up: The 29th

Int'l Leipziger Documentary and Short Film Festival for Cinema and Television, November 21-27, in Leipzig, East Germany, for animated shorts, documentaries and television segments dealing with "the struggle of human kind for peace and freedom from imperialist oppression". Cash prizes awarded...28th Int'l Festival of Documentary and Short Film of Bilbao, November 24-29, in Bilbao, Spain, for shorts under 60 minutes and docs of any length dealing with "images for an understanding between human beings". Cash prizes. For more information come down to the office and photocopy the rules and forms, or get on



6 After all, they can only shoot me. 9

— Anne Jones on taking over the hotseat as head of the Ontario Film and Video Review Board.

the mailing list at Telefilm, the Montreal office - Telefilm Canada, Tour de la Banque Nationale, 600 de ka Gauchetiere Street West, 25th Floor, Montreal, P.Q., H3B 4L2.....

A JOKE BY ALEXANDRA RAFFE:
"HOW MANY FEMINISTS DOES IT TAKE TO CHANGE A LIGHTBULB?"

"ONE. AND IT'S NOT FUNNY."

And finally, we're still looking for some help here. We're looking for articles with usefull information about film productions you are involved in, how you made your first or second film, how you made your first film outside of film school, how you sold it, how much you got for it, and on and on and on and on I'll be leaving this job in September to concentrate on my film THE MYSTERIOUS MOON MEN OF CANADA, and

unless a better candidate comes up, I'll most likely be replaced by Luis Garcia. And as I said over half the board will be working on their own projects and just aren't going to have the time to continue their LIFT projects here, so we need NEW BLOOD. So if you're interested in helping out, or becoming a member of the board, drop us a written letter to the office, and we'll publish the proposed list in the September newsletter. We're not of anticipating that most people at LIFT will be extremely busy this fall, and so attendance at board meetings, which usually happen two or three times a month, is not going to be mandatory all of the time. If you can show up two out of three times, and if people start volunteering their time to LIFT and helping out, we should be able to get through 'til the winter, when things generally slow down.

The present board I think have really gotten things happening around here, but it's time to pass the torch, keep the momentum going, and continue building the co-op over the next year...and I've just heard that the deadline for the prestigious Chicago Film Festival has been extended even more, 'till the 10th of September. Forms at the office.

---C.B.

LIFE-LIKE INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS OF TORONTO

AUGUST 28
I Married a Monster from Outer Space
SCENES FROM A MASSAGE
Alan Smithee directs
Instructed Gaudin
the if you can get them Apart

AUGUST 3
HUD
C.H.U.D.
Early. The report matches the original
where's the trou?

AUGUST 2
JUMBO
RAMBO
See big guys who give a hand

I mutter incantations
To invoke the spirit of Cocteau
I proffer lamentations
To the one
Who was Rimbaud
I drink lots of beer
And try to connect with E. A. Poe
But I'm still not inspired
So I feel like a shimoe
KATHY MORIN



LIFE-LIKE INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS OF TORONTO

STOLEN GOODS

CULLED FROM VARIOUS FILM MAGAZINES

Do's and don'ts for aspiring filmmakers from a director who should know... better.

By JOHN WATERS

I've always wanted to sell out. The problem is that nobody wanted to buy me. Ever since I was a toddler I longed to be a film director (or mad bomber), so I was lucky I didn't have to waste time floundering around in search of a vocation. And if you're cursed with the movie bug, you're forced to decide early whether you want to remain independent or go Hollywood. There are no rules that guarantee success on either path. It's a real-life version of that kids' board game Chutes and Ladders. Just when you think you have it all figured out, along comes some industry hotshot or eccentric entrepreneur to scramble your plans in a minute. "Make it more commercial," the studio bigwigs scream, but the independent producers growl back, "Being original is what really counts." Maybe the solution a distributor friend suggested is the answer: Take the budget of the film you want to make, divide it by the estimated number of people who would pay to see it, add one million, and charge accordingly. Bresson's *L'Argent*, admission \$62.75; *Rocky XX*, 42c. Then everyone would make money and be happy. Isn't that what being commercial is all about?

Film students waste too much time studying "masterpieces." Hit and Run Filmmaking, Avoiding the Unions, or To Hell With Completion Bonds would be a much more practical syllabus. Professors should concentrate on explaining how to set up a limited partnership with ten cocaine-addicted dentists, or faking talent insurance forms with doctors when your leading lady weighs more than five hundred pounds or is addicted to morning-glory seeds. "Air" should be a textbook, since this term is widely accepted by the industry to describe the standard, rip-off factor in this cash business. Do film students know that you can hire a "checker" to go around to the theaters, pay admission, and hand-count the customers to see if the official box-office report reflects the truth? Do they also know that some theaters figure out who the checkers are and pay them more to lie? Do buffs who profess to love the cinema more than life check their torn ticket stubs to see if the serial number matches the original? Otherwise, theater employees are ripping off their favorite directors by reselling the tickets and pocketing the price. Do graduate students in high-powered film schools know that trendy nightclubs will pay the entire cost of a fancy party for your premiere so they get their club in the next day's papers? Is any real practical advice taught today?

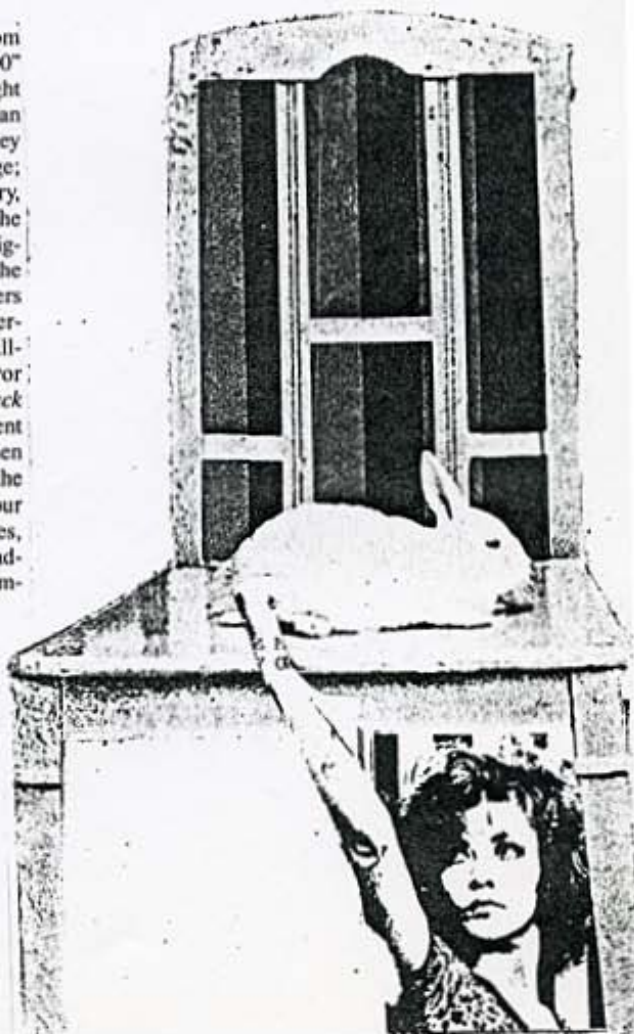
Pitching never really ends, no matter how big you are. Once, in Baltimore, I attended a financial get-together for local fat cats to raise money for a film called *Wilderness*. The budget was twenty million. It would star Richard Dreyfuss and be directed by John Frankenheimer (*Seven Days in May*, *The Manchurian Candidate*, *French Connection II*, *Birdman of Alcatraz*). There he was, doing the same thing I had been doing for years—hustling money. God, it never ends! The only difference was that he had part of the pitch on video, much fancier financial prospectives, and a gourmet meal for the potential backers. I usually just offered them a cigarette.

"Casting" is very important in getting a film financed, since even one "name" is enough to guarantee a nontheatrical sale to Uganda or some such important international ancillary market. Try hiring brothers and sisters of famous stars (Joey Travolta, Kevin Dillon) and hope that nobody in Tunisia knows the difference. Independently, cast and crew will sometimes work for a small salary if you give them "points" in the film's profits. I never understood why you couldn't be fair and reverse this custom and ask for the salaries back if the project loses money.

For some unfathomable reason, the axiom "It's easier to get \$5 million than \$500,000" seems to be true, so ask for \$40 million right off the bat. Explain that naturally you have an army of lackeys who travel with you and they are used to the high life. Talk his language; he'll understand. When pitching your story, always compare it to a recent hit, since the studios never seem to remember that the biggest moneymakers were highly original in the first place. If your project is about teenagers who are prematurely aged to senility by a certain sex act and then take their revenge by killing newborn infants, describe it as a horror film combining the best of *Cocoon* and *Back to the Future*. Once you get the development deal, complete the draft you want, and then write four inferior versions and turn in the worst first. Since no matter how great your script is, they always make you do rewrites, you can save yourself some time and headaches by letting them think your script improved because of their input.

...when the going gets tough,
he tough get going" ---anon.

NOT HOW TO MAKE A MOVIE



PROFESSIONAL NEGATIVE SERVICES

Atom Egoyan dropped by the office the other day and asked me what I thought "Professional Negative Services" meant. PNS is one of LIFT's neighbors, and Atom wondered if it was the kind of place you could go if you were feeling perhaps a bit too happy for your own good or unreasonably optimistic about the future and needed a quick come-down. Another friend had raised the same question a few weeks ago, and, my curiosity aroused, I decided to investigate. Upon answering the door, owner Dennis White explained that Atom's hunch had been correct, and he did indeed provide such a service. "And speaking of hunches" he added "Have you ever thought of getting into another line of work? I just saw your last film, and I don't think that you could direct traffic. You are a sub-human sex mutant completely devoid of any virtues or socially redeeming value whatsoever. The doctor should have slapped your mother when you were born. If the government ever starts taxing brains, you're going to be in for a big refund. And by the way, I've got inside information that there will be a major nuclear holocaust before the year is over. Now get the hell outa here and don't let me see your cheery little face again, you wimp." Hey, man, criticism is one thing, but nobody tells me that I'm stoopid. I've got more brains in my whole head than Dennis has got in his little finger.

---Colin Brunton

P.S. Dennis White is also an excellent negative cutter and gives people good rates and fast service. He's been at it for over 35 years, starting his career in Britain in the early fifties working with Technicolour prints. PNS's phone number is 593 5488.



GONZO SCREENINGS @ THE FESTIVAL OF FESTIVALS

Did you get your film turned down by the Festival of Festivals this year? Do you still want to show it at the Festival? Phone Colin at the office and find out about the GONZO SCREENINGS. Basically what we're going to do is show our films on the sidewalks and streets near this year's venues for the Festival. A cube van set up with a screen on one side of the street, a van with a roof-rack and Honda generator on the other side, start the projector, and presto! we're part of the Festival! We don't want to appear to be bitter or upset that our films were rejected (a lot of LIPT films are officially part of the Fest this year), we just want our films shown period, and these Gonzo Screenings are a fun way of doing it. This was done by Bruce MacDonald and others from LIPT a few years back, and from all accounts it was a great success. They simply set up a screen and projector in front of the University Theatre and attracted the attention of about 50 people, one irate University Theatre manager, and two policemen, who reluctantly had to ask Bruce to shut down. They even got a 10 minute spot on CITY-TV and an interview with...JEANNIE BEKKER!!!!!! We can't name names but we have an insider who ...gee, maybe I shouldn't even mention this part...uh... who works for the fest, or with people at the fest, or all of the above or none of the above (I don't want to get this person in trouble) who is going to make sure that all of the invited press attending the Fest gets the Gonzo press release as well as all the exciting news about the JACK LEMMON film premiering there this year. Again I want to stress that this is not a platform for politicking or whining, but a light-hearted jab at the Fest, and it should be a lot of fun. Our honorary patron saints for this event are St. Groucho (Marx) and St. Hunter (S. Thompson). If you are interested in taking part or helping or showing your films, give me a call at the office.

---Colin Brunton

FESTIVAL OF FESTIVALS UPDATE

At the last possible minute a number of LIPT members' films have been included in this year's Festival of Festival: Jeremy Podeswa's: HIGH IN THE CABARET DE LA VITA, Keith Hlady's THERE IS A RALLY, Patricia Rozema's URBAN GRAFFITI, and Annette Mangaard's HER SOIL IS GOLD. This film was originally shot on Super-Eight, then Annette optically printed it onto 16mm film, and will be shown at the Cumberland 3 on September 10 @ 7:00 p.m. It features an original soundtrack by THE PALACE AT FOUR A.M. Annette, depending on the availability of prints, may bring one of her earlier films to the meeting on Monday. Congratulations to all LIPT members who are now a part of the Festival this year.

In addition to Atom Egoyan's MEN: A PASSION PLAYGROUND & Bruce MacDonald's KNOCK! KNOCK!

NOTE: I just noticed a real bad typo, a whole word wrong - URBAN GRAFFITI is really called URBAN VENUE. This was Patricia Rozema's first film, it's three minutes long, and Alexan... Raffo is listed as "the crew".

Films included so far in the GONZO SCREENINGS include Colin's A TRIP AROUND LAKE ONTARIO, Rob Shoub's A WOMAN AND HER DOG, Derek Roger's MY NEUVEN, Bruce Moffitt's THE STORYTELLERS, and Michelle Sirois' A STRANGER IN MY OWN LAND. The only criteria for being involved is that you are a member (affiliate, associate or full) of LIPT, have been turned down for the fest in the last two years, your film doesn't contain too much foul language, and you have a slight trace of subversive/anarchist spirit in you.

dreams...



Sincerely,

Françoise Picard
Film and Holography Officer

The Canada Council

Please let us know when exactly you plan to stage your "gonzo" screenings. We'll pretend we are in the "huge line-up" and heckle

"...when the going gets weird, the weird turn pro."
- Dr. Hunter S. Thompson.