

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 5

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER, 1989

## A TRIP AROUND LAKE SUPERIOR (?)

The LIFT Retrospective on the Road by Virginia Rankin

**LOOKING OUT** - Letters from Co-ops Across Canada

A stylized, high-contrast map of Canada is shown in the background. The word "CANADA" is printed in large, bold, block letters across the center of the map. Various cities and regions are labeled with smaller text, including Yellowknife, Whitehorse, Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal. The map uses a grid system to delineate provinces and territories.

CANADA



Oh come all ye Faithful...

LIFT members

to the annual

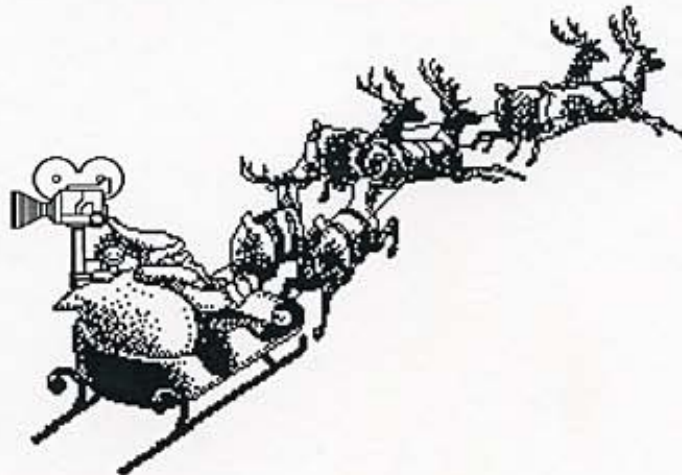
# LIFT XMAS BASH

Tuesday December 14

7:30 p.m.

345 Adelaide St. W. Suite # 505

beer, wine & other fun stuff



\* volunteer hours for bringing food! Call the LIFT office if interested

The LIFT office will be closed for the holidays Dec 23 - Jan 2 inclusive  
There will be no December monthly screening but stay tuned for some fabulous  
new works in January.

# SHORT ENDS

*If you have any announcements such as the completion of a new film, awards received, baby announcements, major screenings etc., please call or mail your info to the LIFT office.*

## CFMDC XMAS PARTY

Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre is holding its annual Xmas party on DECEMBER 15, 1989. Food, drinks, music, dancing... Everyone is welcome. Party begins at 5:30pm. Beer and wine, cheese, vegetables and dips, caviar, smoked salmon, chicken wings, chocolate mousse, exotic male and female dancers wrapped in nitrate celluloid (if available). The CFMDC is located at 67A Portland St. (south of King, east of Bathurst).

## AWARDS and MAJOR SCREENINGS

Alan Zweig's *Stealing Images* was the winner of a Silver Hugo at this year's Chicago International Film Festival. Congratulations Alan!

Presented November 15 - 19 at the IN VISIBLE COLOURS Film and Video Festival celebrating international women's cinema were Claire Prieto's and Dionne Brand's *Older, Stronger, Wiser*; Maureen Judge's and Lillian Allen's *Unnatural Causes*; and Daisy Lee's *Morning Zoo*.

## CALL FOR ENTRIES—IMAGES 90

Northern Visions will be celebrating its third annual event with the IMAGES 90 Festival of Independent Film and Video. The festival showcases innovative and contemporary Canadian work, and a small percentage of international works in VHS, Beta, 3/4",

16mm and 35mm. The festival will once again include SPEAKING NEW MEDIA, workshop sessions on the technical, aesthetic, political and business aspects of production.

The deadline for film and video submissions is FEBRUARY 2, 1990—one submission per producer or director. The festival prefers preview submissions in VHS. There is no entry fee, and all selected films and videos receive a rental fee. Festival entry forms are available at the Northern Visions office at Suite 3, 67A Portland St., Toronto, 971-8405, or can be photocopied at the LIFT office.

## A REMINDER TO ALL FILMMAKERS...

Working on a film right now? Script in development? Please tell us! We're not only interested in hearing about recently completed members' films but those in pre-production and production, too. Help us out by supplying us with the information, and maybe we can help you. And don't forget to give us the latest scoop on festivals entered and awards won! Please contact Susan at the LIFT office. 596-8233.

## WANNA BE ON THE FABULOUSLY EXCITING, PRESTIGIOUS LIFT PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE?

Seems we're a few members short. Here's your opportunity to put some of your screening ideas into action and contribute to charting LIFT's future course in the area of exhibition and exposure of members' work. A meaningful contribution to the co-op and volunteer hours to boot! Please contact Susan at the LIFT office A.S.A.P.

## LETTERS

We are encouraging members and non-members to submit letters to the newsletter. Any burning issues, or responses to articles in past newsletters? Send your letters to the LIFT office c/o the newsletter editor.

## THANKS JANET

A very special thanks to you Janet Goode, not only for donating dubbers to us, but going to the trouble of delivering them to our door. I'm certain that these dubbers will be a great asset to LIFT members in the future.

When I was initially talking to Janet about the dubbers, she mentioned that all we had to do is find 'some genius' to put the things together. Miraculously, a short time after you delivered the dubbers, 'some genius' named Gord Creelman came in and said he could put them together. He's being doing wonders ever since.

Once again, many thanks to Janet Goode for her ongoing support of LIFT.

Greg Woodbury  
Technical Manager



# A TRIP AROUND LAKE SUPERIOR (?)

by Virginia Rankin



This picturesque and harmonious scene has stirred the emotions of many people the artists, the photographers, the writers, the taxidermists...

Back in the summer I applied for the job of driving a bunch of films around Ontario on the LIFT Retrospective Tour. Sounds like fun I thought; besides, what are the chances of me being otherwise employed in November. Well, lo and behold, from a crowded field of two applicants, I just happened to have all of the qualifications: my own vehicle and a blithe lack of geographical knowledge. Little did I know that Thunder Bay was all the way up there.

My first step was to arm myself with a CAA membership, applying the "if you have an umbrella it won't rain" theory. Thus armed with highlighted maps and guides to the motels of the Americas I set off.

First stop: SAW Gallery, Ottawa. Nice to start the job off cushy. SAW has a projectionist and a very nice set-up. They also have a bar. On the first night, we were honoured with the presence of no less than four Canada Council members, including Francoise Picard, who bought me a beer. Public attendance, however, left a little to be desired. Is it Toronto-itis? One audience member asked if there

was any French work included, and looked as if she felt very sorry for me when I said no. Response was good, however, and I was asked a lot of questions about LIFT and if I knew anywhere to get film cheap. Ha!

While in Ottawa I managed to make it to the National Gallery which is very big and cold and *empty*. I did have a nice nap while watching some Samuel Beckett tapes though.

The second night at SAW was much the same as the first, same smallish crowd, but good response from those there. Little birds told me that nobody goes out in Ottawa after November 1st. Is this true?

I returned to Toronto at this point, since my next stop was St. Catharines, which is the *other way*. I drove very fast to the NAC (Niagara Artists' Centre) where Marin Rumsby eagerly awaited my arrival. He was probably the most enthusiastic and knowledgeable of all of our hosts. The NAC also has a bar. This is something really great I discovered about small cities.

St. Catharines had a very good turn

out, thanks largely to Martin's enthusiastic promotion of the screenings. Between reels he entertained me with his opinions on various films, none of which will be divulged here. The crowd was very friendly and receptive to the LIFT work. Somebody said to me that if she had known it would be so accessible, she would have invited her friends. Well... There were also three film students who surprised me with their enthusiasm and intelligence. Usually film students are so... Not there.

So both nights in St. Catharines were gratifying and I topped the whole thing off by driving a terrified OAC employee home in the worst storm I have yet to see this year.

I had one full day off back in Toronto before I set off on the major leg of the tour. This was to start in Windsor at Artcite. There was some apprehension from Artcite about turnout, but we ended up with a good crowd. Artcite has a great location and it seems there isn't that much to do on the north side of the border. We even counted one Detroit resident in attendance.

The next day I got brave and headed for the Detroit Institute of Art, which is the best art museum I've seen in North America. Detroit itself is another kind of museum. It's quite incredible; the streets are these beautiful long wide vistas, with almost no traffic and no people. Even large department stores stand deserted, and there are burnt-out mansions one block from the Art Deco of the main street. Windsor too, seems depressed, but in a tiny way. It's such a small scale city, it sort of struck me as the shadow of the big city across the river. But what is really interesting is the shared cultural community of artists from Detroit and Windsor. There are joint exhibitions and shared studios which seem to enrich both sides.

The second night at Artcite was similar to the first, but we lost a lot of

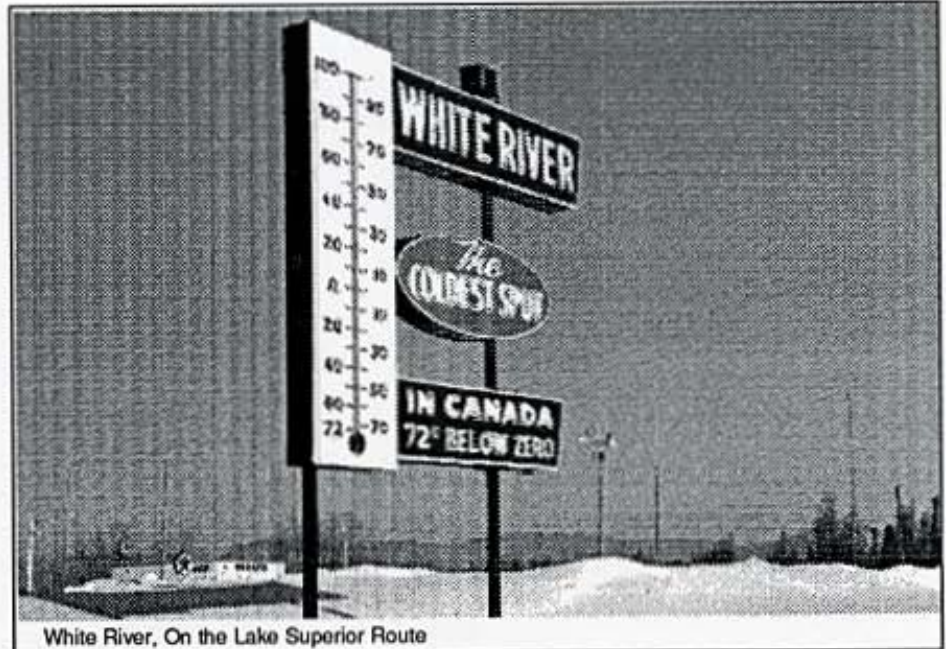


audience before Lac La Croix, mainly from fatigue I believe, but a shame, because the film is consistently well received. In Windsor the students asked unanswerable questions like "How do you become a filmmaker?"

By now my boyfriend had arrived on the bus from Toronto, and the next morning we said good-bye to my host, Christine Burchnall, and her two enormous cats. Next stop Thunder Bay. Now some of you may have noticed that Thunder Bay is a long way from Windsor, and that there is no direct route because there are all of those big lakes. So the CAA recommended route was to go up between Huron and Michigan, and around Superior on the southern side. The first step of course was to get into the states with a bunch of film cans, a projector and hundreds of LIFT catalogues. Luckily, the customs lady seemed singularly uninterested in anything we were doing and waved us straight through. I gave Steve the fifteen minute guided tour of Downtown Devasted Detroit, and then we got on the freeway. We drove through lots of cities named after cars, and lots of McDonald's drive-throughs. (I don't eat meat, but I do eat fries and sundaes.)

We noticed that as we went north it got rather empty, and in fact the whole of northern Michigan shuts shop for the winter. Luckily, the Econo Lodge ("Spend the Night, Not a Fortune") in Mackinaw City is open year round. Mackinaw City itself is another story. This city is almost at the junction of Lakes Huron, Michigan and Superior. Huron and Michigan literally meet there, and Superior is just a bit north. The Mackinaw Bridge is spectacular, and affords a view of a lake on either side, looking very sea-green and expansive. But there was nobody there. This is a summer resort area which must be absolutely packed in July and August. I can't say I minded being there in November.

So we continued to drive, eventually leaving Michigan and entering Wisconsin. At this point, Steve and I had run out of interesting things to say to each other, so I amused myself by



White River, On the Lake Superior Route

reading signs out loud. Bernie's Liquor Bar, Gitche Gumme Camp-ground, Christmas, Wisconsin, Population 76. We didn't have a tape deck, but by the way of radio station WIMI, "Your Hunting Hotline", we learned that it was the first day of deer season. "Call us with your kills, your safety tips and your venison recipes." Maybe that's why you see so little roadkill in the north...hunting is so effective.

Our goal for that day was to end up in Superior, Wisconsin, which is actually slightly inferior, except for the excellent Hammond Bar/Lounge/Liquor Store/Gun Shop/Steak Palace, which was conveniently located across from our motel. The next day we crossed the bridge into Duluth, Minnesota, home of Bob Dylan and non-dairy creamer. I kid you not; you cannot get a coffee with real cream or even milk in this part of the world.

Continuing north through Minnesota, it was still deer season. There were trucks and cars parked all over the roads, and presumably little orange men and the odd woman running around in the woods shooting at innocent animals, and occasionally each other. At one point we were passed by a 1975 green Cadillac with four orange men sitting inside and four furry brown legs sticking straight out of the trunk. Other than that, the scenery was magnificent. The

weather was great, sunny and crisp and we made good time up to the Canadian border. It's only a short stretch from the border up to Thunder Bay, but Steve, being something of a nationalist, was convinced that the landscape got better as soon as we left Minnesota.

We arrived at Lakehead University to meet Rick Fedoruk from Monitor North who informed us of the bad news that Definitely Superior was having a major opening that evening. That would explain the terrible turn-out in Thunder Bay. We had about six people for both screenings, but would probably have had a decent showing if it weren't for the conflicts. In cities like Thunder Bay, the artistic community is very small and close-knit, and there just aren't enough people for two events. However, just being there certainly created a connection, and meeting people from both Monitor North and Definitely Superior will mean that next time LIFT sends films to Thunder Bay, which I believe it should, there will already be a positive attitude towards the event. I did in fact cautiously ask Lynn Sharman of Monitor North whether she felt that there was any Toronto-itis in Thunder Bay, and she said definitely not. Whew!

From Thunder Bay on to North Bay, via the spectacular north side of Superior, and a night in Wawa. In



Wawa I learnt some franglais in a bar: "eh you, bébé, chérie, gimme anover beer." Wawa is a very rough town, where women are women and there aren't any sheep, and I was very glad of my male companion's presence. The next day we passed through Sudbury and Sault Ste. Marie, with no time to look at the slag or the giant nickel. We arrived in North Bay a night early, and the next morning Steve took the bus back to Toronto. I went off to find the White Water Gallery to introduce myself and to ask directions to the Dionne Quints house. Yes, I had to do it. It's the epitome of confused cultural messages. Look, we destroyed these young lives, and a whole family to boot, but look how much publicity we got from it. Why look, North Bay is even on maps now. Needless to say, I bought some postcards.

North Bay was only scheduled for one night's program and we got a moderate sized crowd who really seemed to enjoy the films. They were the only real laugh-out-loud group. They were also a slightly older crowd than most centres, which was interesting.

Next and last stop, Peterborough. Start the job cushy, end the job cushy. Artspace is huge and fabulous. They not only have a projection booth, but two projectors. We got our largest

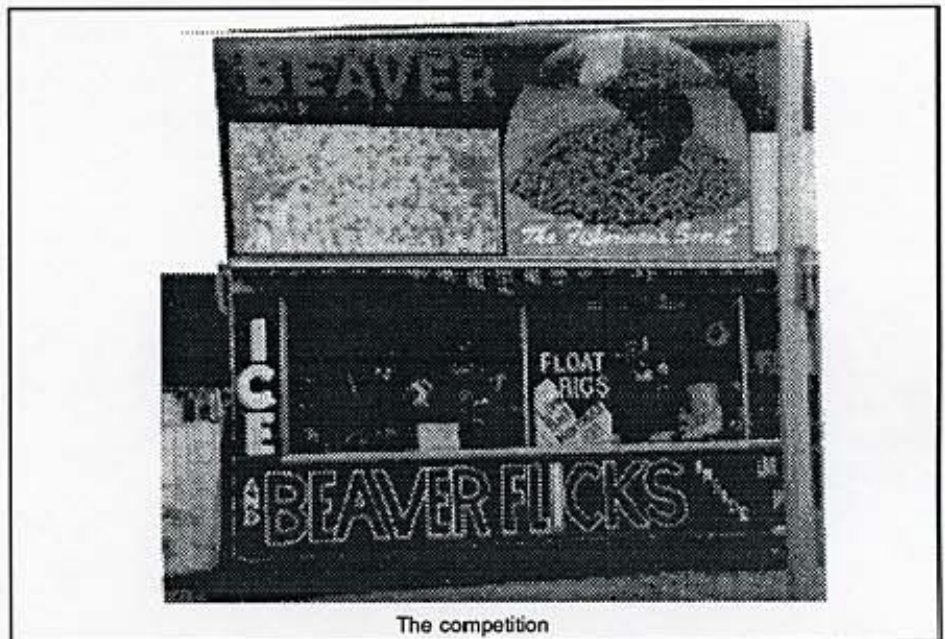
crowds here, for both nights, and gratifying feedback. By now I was pretty road weary, and glad to finish the tour off well. Susan Norget came up from Toronto for the second night and we had some fun. But boy was it nice to get home to Toronto on Saturday and do some laundry.

I feel that in spite of a few disappointingly small crowds, LIFT gained immensely in awareness in the regions that we visited. Most people attending had never heard of LIFT, but were amazed at the diversity and accomplishment of the films they saw. There was a lot of "I wish we had a

film co-op here" talk, and I encouraged people to look into it and to subscribe to the LIFT newsletter as Affiliate members. I also pointed out to a lot of people that they could access these films and others through distributors if they were interested in organizing more screenings.

I am confident that word-of-mouth will be good. LIFT will be remembered and future outreach programs will be aided by the liaison we have created with these regional artists' centres.

P.S. I had fun too.



The competition

## LOOKING OUT

At the best of times communication amongst independents has been sporadic and eclectic, coming mainly from films, newsletters, Cinema Canada, phone calls and word of mouth. Since Montreal's co-op Main Film presented 5 Jours Du Cinema Independant Canadien in November 1988 (screenings and seminars with filmmakers and co-op representatives from across Canada), there have been several more meetings of independents: Images 89, Yorkton, the Experimental Film Congress, the Independent Film and Video Alliance Annual General Meeting in Halifax, In Visible Colours, the Grierson Docu-

mentary Seminars, other festivals and seminars both large and small, as well as co-op tours and individual filmmakers on tour. The village gets smaller.

The letters on the following pages, coming from co-op members across Canada, are as different in style, mood and predilection as the regional differences which separate us. However, printed together these letters seem to draw a portrait of the independent film artist who often seems to embody frenzied energy, business bravado, folksy common sense, intelligence, idealism, a bitter sense of irony, depression, frustration, joy, en-

couragement and persistence.

These letters, coming in response to questions about 5 Jours Du Cinema and independent film in general in several of the regions, are but a fraction of the exchanges taking place now—written and recorded. Hopefully these letters, or introductions, are the beginnings of a more broadly based dialogue that can take place within future issues of these pages.

*(The following letters have been edited for the newsletter)*

—Gary Popovich



## VANCOUVER

Montreal was terrific. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting filmmakers from across the country at the 5 Jours du Cinema. I particularly enjoyed the informal discussions over lunch and dinner, especially that memorable \$2.99 breakfast at the greasy spoon around the corner from Main Film. The formal discussions I found perhaps less helpful, as they tended to reiterate what we already knew. It is difficult to take the experience of an event like that back home to share with others; it's the energy of all those people with common goals together in one place, at one time that is stimulating. Everyone should be encouraged to travel to festivals with seminars and experience it for themselves.

In that sense we are always starting from zero. Because we were a new group of people, a lot of what we covered in our discussions has already been gone over many times in Alliance meetings—the need for networking, the need to support other filmmakers in other regions experiencing the same problems, the need to make an effort to organize screenings of independent work from other parts of the country. What seems to happen is that when people come together for an event like the 5 Days of Independent Cinema it generates the momentum to get things moving (like this for example, your soliciting input from other parts of the country for your publication). Good things come out of that, an exchange of ideas that ultimately has an effect on our film work. Then after a while that energy dissipates. Nothing much happens for a while. Eventually someone gets the new and brilliant idea to bring independent filmmakers together from across the country and the whole thing starts all over again.

And meanwhile all those not very well paid coordinators and administrators keep things trucking along when the filmmakers have run out of steam.

What's happening in film in B.C.? I can only report on what I see from my corner. David Rimmer has a new

short film, *Divine Mannequins*, that combines film and video [since then Rimmer has also released *Black Cat White Cat It's A Good Cat If It Catches The Mouse*]. Oliver Hockenhull has a 72 minute experimental film, *Determinations*, which you also should see, if you haven't already; and Ann Marie Fleming has a new film called *You Take Care Now*. Fumiko Kiyooka is working on a feature length experimental drama called *Days*. Almost everyone is working on longer films now, except for the students. There should be a whole batch of new student films soon and that's always fun.

There is lots of feature fever going around. It is difficult to get short films screened, especially in a sensitively curated program—it really isn't too surprising that most people want to go to longer formats. It will probably be just as difficult to get those screened but since there have been some successes others are encouraged to make the attempt.

Well...how have I done? Can I stop now? I have to stay awake long enough to phone Germany during their business hours. Our program of films that we sent on tour has gone astray and after many phone calls we seem to be only marginally closer to locating them. This is how the energy dissipates...

Good luck with your publication. Come and visit us on the west coast.

Regards,  
Liz Murray



Still from David Rimmer's *Black Cat, White Cat*

## WINNIPEG

I must apologize profusely for my tardy response; unfortunately (for me) and fortunately (for my members), it's been quite active here in Winnipeg.

In January of this year, we presented a month-long celebration of Manitoba film entitled, "We're in the Movies". We received funding from CIDO and the Canada Council to mount this gargantuan event which was, essentially, four weeks of screenings, lectures, forums, premieres and workshops; all of which was done to make the general public more aware of independent film production in their own backyard.

As well, the WFG has been producing a thirteen part, half-hour television series entitled *NIGHT VISIONS*. I managed to secure a broadcast license from a group of three television stations (in Winnipeg, Regina and Saskatoon), which of course, has been very helpful in terms of raising additional funds. The whole point of the series was to take a selection of the weird and wonderful WFG productions from the last fifteen years and showcase them in an anthology format. Most of these films are very playable, but because most of them had oddball running times, it had been difficult to get conventional airdates. By packaging them in this way, the films will now reach a much wider audience. The show will have host segments which will be short, snappy, quirky and funny. Essentially, what we've got here is a perverted *TWILIGHT ZONE* of the prairies. Once the series has been broadcast in Winnipeg, Regina and Saskatoon, it becomes ours to market internationally.

I might also mention that documentary production is gaining a recent and most welcome resurgence within the group. I credit this to a group of dedicated young filmmakers and Janis Cole. Janis came to town and delivered an intensive, hands-on documentary filmmaking workshop. Out of this workshop came three superb, little documentaries. In addition to these



three, there are currently five doc's in various stages of production. Thank God!!!! This sort of thing is my bread and butter in the educational and institutional marketplaces.

Another bit of activity is related to my ongoing efforts to penetrate as wide a market as possible through film festivals. I'm convinced that festivals—especially the ones that give out prizes—are the best way to get one's product seen and sold. One of the services I offer to all my members—free of charge, I might add—is a complete festival submission service.



Still from *The Obsession of Billy Botski* a film by John Pazis

On the *Tales From The Gimli Hospital* front, what can I say? Everything is going superbly with Guy Maddin's feature length cult film. Andre Bennett at Cinephile has proved to be a magnificent distributor; in fact, I'm convinced he is the only distributor in this country that actually knows what a good movie is. One of the wonder-

ful things which Andre recently accomplished was tying into a joint distribution agreement on *Gimli Hospital* with Ben Barenholtz of the New York-based Circle Films. Ben is handling the distribution of *Gimli* in the States and we're all real happy about this. You see, Ben is the man who distributed such films as *Eraserhead*, *Pink Flamingoes*, *El Topo*, and *Blood Simple*. Guy's film appears to be in very good hands. Also, Guy and myself, were present for the film's American premiere at the San Francisco International Film Festival. This was an absolutely fabulous festival; beautifully programmed, superbly organized and boasting one of the nicest, kindest, most helpful festival staffs I've ever run across. The flick went over like gangbusters and both of us spent every night in the legendary Tosca's, consuming death-defying amounts of alcohol and hobnobbing with Zoetrope-types and the like. As a matter of fact, we didn't really feel like leaving. Ever. But alas, we did; realizing that Canada is truly the best place in the world to make movies.

Well, that's about it for now. [Greg then made an impressive list of festivals at which he would be representing WPG films in the near future.] A distributor's job is never done. Especially in Canada. Hope all is well.

Sincerely,  
Greg Klymkiw  
WFG Director of Distribution and Marketing

#### MONTREAL

I haven't made a film in four years...am i still a filmmaker? I'm finishing a video, does that make me a video ARTIST? What am i? Who am i? Who cares? Does it matter?

My video, my first project that is all my own in four years, my homage to a friend/lover who committed suicide.....i am afraid, afraid of failure, afraid of falling flat on my face...trying to convey feelings, emotions, rather than tell a story, but FUCKING TV, people

always expect a story to come out of that FUCKING BOX. Even though we call it VIDEO, not TV, people still watch VIDEO on TV...things get so mixed up...

i am depressed...

We are caught up here in the Bourgeois Language debate...We are people of contradiction. How can we dare protest, bitch, be nationalistic about our culture, our language when the whole fucking province votes in Mulroney and Free Trade? It makes no sense. Thousands of young people demonstrate to preserve the LANGUAGE but where are they when it's time to demonstrate against repressive welfare reforms, outrageous changes in the loans and bur-saries, things that affect them directly!

I am depressed and angry!

We re-elect BOU-BOU-BOURASSA forgetting October '70, his sleaziness and dishonesty...our country is run by a capitalist from Quebec who put a lot of workers out of work, destroyed lives for his own profit, runs the country like a business, selling us to the highest bidder...what the fuck?

And I am making a video

#### LA RELEVE

Our films and videos from this new generation, La Releve as we call it, are very interior works: lots of voice-overs, beautiful images...the film schools do their job very well, we know how to make nice pictures, but i feel that we haven't got much to say anymore...i long for the days of shaky cameras, rough editing and lots of energy.

I want to make a film, I want to feel it in my hands, watch frame by frame, hang it, load it, cut it, burn it, fuck it...i want to make an angry film, i am pissed off that there is no BUZZ, no energy. We are all being screwed by the few men who control us and nobody says anything anymore, not even me...



## "OUR MAILBOXES DON'T GO BOOM ANYMORE"

So, we continue to masturbate, spewing it out, on film, video, it doesn't matter as long as someone is watching, waiting for the come shot, because ultimately that's what it's all about for us guys, EJACULATION, we are raised to ejaculate, feeling good doesn't count, you have to go all the way and we are not taught/shown to appreciate the moments in-between, we have to learn that on our own by listening to heartbeats, ours and theirs...

Take care my friend, write soon.

Love,  
Claude Ouellet  
Newsletter Editor, Main Film

## HALIFAX

I was one of those people in Montreal who wondered why each time we met, we had to begin at zero. And it's great that a few of us have begun to try to improve communication between our organizations.

In response to your questions:

1) Montreal's Five Days of Cinema: It was a wonderful experience, as the new co-ordinator of AFCCOOP (Atlantic Filmmakers' Co-operative), to finally meet those whose names I've seen on letters, posters, newsletters, and filmographies. I do feel there was a problem with translation, that not enough care and attention was given to ensure a more precise translation of the discussions.

2) A great many of our members were involved with one of the four feature films shot in Halifax in the fall. Some are still involved with post-production on one of those films, *The Vacant Lot*, written and directed by AFCCOOP member Bill MacGillivray. Mark Simkins, Jim McSwain and other members are finishing shorter films.

I truly believe that filmmakers must produce films in whatever context and



Still from *The Vacant Lot A* film by Bill MacGillivray

form they feel comfortable with, without going out of their way to make something which, for instance, CBC might buy. Co-operative based, independent filmmakers have faced almost insurmountable problems, further compounded by regional disparity. The body of works which independent filmmakers have produced over the years is something of which the Co-ops may be extremely proud.

3) The media in Halifax has been truly supportive of local filmmakers and their work. There are many reasons for this: a few of the media are involved in the arts community themselves and so have a built in "compassion" for the independents. A few others cannot disassociate the local independents from the Hollywood crowd that occasionally grace our shores and so therefore throw a little of the same stardust our way. Still a few more believe that the film business is a glamorous one (having done unit publicity on *The Vacant Lot*, I can attest to this!) and so are willing to spend long, cold days on a set to get a story. And, finally, there is a journalism department at one of our universities and a lot of the students who graduate and continue to work in Halifax have had some experience with independent film production.

Best Regards,  
Heather Levecque  
Coordinator, AFCCOOP

## CALGARY

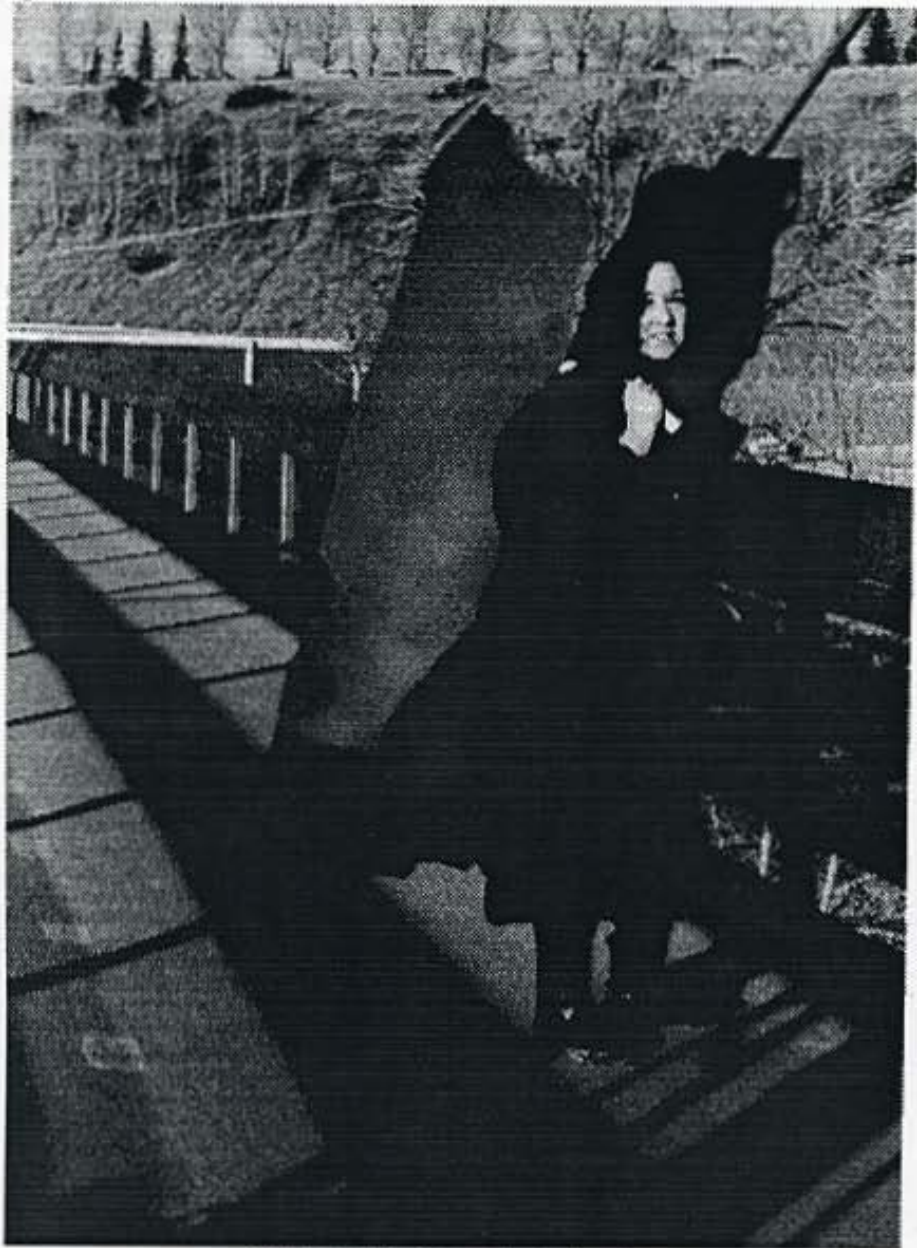
### Marginal Observations

Where do we fit in? The Calgary Society of Independent Filmmakers (CSIF)? Are we, in the prairie region, paralleling the centre? Are we marginalized? Or, are we all cultural islands cutting our own edges, our own paths? Is there common ground?

We are the first generation of alternative filmmakers here in Alberta with no real film school, struggling for our own and our organization's survival. Right winged conservatism prevails. No comprehension is found here about anything except money. Coming home from Montreal's 5 Jours, I sat on the plane next to the president of a Calgary based oil company. He was enchanted by my exoticness (an artist and filmmaker!). "But," he asked, "why is it that you just won't put the red wagon in your painting—just give them what they want?" So, I asked him if he made babies for money. He looked puzzled and I realized he was looking forward to his old age and the comforts of a son/daughter (?) who would be a doctor, lawyer...

The wealthy corporations consider us too "far out" of the mainstream—a recent canvass of the corporate sector to find funds to assist us with the purchase of a new camera has found \$0 so far. The press has not written





Still from *the Beginning* a film by Jane Evans

about an exhibition here at the CSIF (nearly 20) since May 1987. And yet the mainstream arts who operate in the red have their debts retired by the provincial government. Socialized capitalism, I guess. However, the horizon looks less bleak—a tenacious lobby by the film and video arts community in this province has finally acquired more operations and equipment funding (we are now just under par with equivalent organizations in most of the other provinces). There is still a ceiling of \$5000.00 on a limited number of provincial film/video production grants. In spite of these serious problems, past and present, WE ARE MAKING FILM. [In support

of her assertions Jane left me with information regarding the various forms of co-op support available to film artists, as well as an extensive list of film and video exhibits (regional and national productions) held recently in Calgary.]

Women, blacks and other disenfranchised groups have often been told that living on the edge:

the edge of poverty  
the edge of extinction  
the edge of a culture

provides the energy  
the impetus  
sharpens the edge

making it  
I presume  
the cutting edge...

as though they/we are supposed to be thankful. The edge of the margin or the edge of a region is also a cutting edge. Our community lives, thrives in fact.

Jane Evans is an inter-media artist and co-ordinator of the Calgary Society of Independent Filmmakers (CSIF)

### TORONTO AN OPEN LETTER TO THE LIFT MEMBERSHIP

[On one of her recent trips to Toronto, Martine Sauvageau, coordinator of the Independent Film and Video Alliance, poured out yet another of her now infamous passionate statements on the independent scene in Canada. The following was written in French and translated by Gary Popovich and Martine Sauvageau.]

This year there was 5 Jours du Cinema in Montreal and Images 89 in Toronto. Having attended these two events, I am pleased to see the posing of relative questions concerning the development of our independent sector. Above all, what surprises me is the fact that despite all the pitfalls that we come across, or rather because of them, we are developing a solidarity and a consensus to support the vibrant passion that animates us in our creative activities. Still we have every reason in the world to hate each other: what can an animator really understand about video art? What can a documentary filmmaker from Quebec really have in common with an experimental filmmaker from Toronto? And the differences between female and male artists...

During two years in the position of co-ordinator of the Alliance, I have witnessed our differences and I don't think there's any one among us naive enough to waste energy on making them disappear. No, surprisingly the Alliance has learned to work with this.



Using "new age" vocabulary, I would say that sometimes I have the impression that a group spirit glides above our particular interests each time we meet each other.

While the government spends millions of promotional dollars to force us to swallow their controversial programs, while they speak of a national identity, while institutions such as the Canada Council see their funds frozen, it's now the time, more than ever to form a communal front so that funds can be directly available to our artists if we want to maintain our vitality. The independent cultural sector that we constitute is the only one producing indigenous culture whose high degree of artistic excellence is appreciated around the world.

Some of us, in a moment of depression, will be tempted to "commercial-

ize" our productions, to change our professional orientation, myself included, to become state employees, bureaucrats, administrators. Is it better to be poor and creatively vibrant than rich and disfigured by mediocrity? I say yes. And this poverty will force us, perhaps, to feel this "group spirit" that is behind the creation of all our co-ops, to feel and to sustain by putting yet greater efforts in the making of our co-ops as creative venues which will assure our survival and our continuity.

The more we create opportunities of enlarging our horizons and mutual understanding, the more chance to have an open spirit in our co-ops...and when one has an open spirit, the solutions to our problems come much easier. Let's not allow necessity to divide us, above all at times when promotion around national budgets, taxes, etc. incite us to re-inforce our

fears to the point of paranoia.

In 1990, the Independent Film and Video Alliance, which now represents about 7500 members, will be ten years old and it is to Toronto that we will come to celebrate this event. I look forward to seeing you then.

Sincerely,  
Martine Sauvageau  
Coordinator,  
Independent Film and Video Alliance



## CLASSIFIED

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## GRANT DEADLINES

### CANADA COUNCIL

#### EXPLORATIONS

| DEADLINES    | RESULTS      |
|--------------|--------------|
| January 15   | mid April    |
| May 1        | end July     |
| September 15 | mid December |

#### AID TO ARTISTS (INDIVIDUALS)

| DEADLINES    | RESULTS   |
|--------------|-----------|
| A: October 1 | January 1 |
| B: April 1   | July 1    |

## FILM PRODUCTION

| DEADLINES   | RESULTS    |
|-------------|------------|
| July 15     | October 1  |
| November 15 | February 1 |

## ART BANK

| DEADLINES  | RESULTS       |
|------------|---------------|
| February 1 | mid March     |
| August 1   | mid September |

## ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL

### FILM PRODUCTION

| DEADLINES  | RESULTS        |
|------------|----------------|
| November 1 | early February |
| April 1    | early July     |

## SCREENWRITING

| DEADLINES  | RESULTS   |
|------------|-----------|
| February 1 | early May |

## PROJECT GRANTS

| DEADLINES    | RESULTS      |
|--------------|--------------|
| September 15 | mid November |

## ARTISTS AND THE WORKPLACE

| DEADLINE | RESULTS    |
|----------|------------|
| March 1  | mid April  |
| July 4   | mid August |

## FESTIVALS

### AMERICAN FILM AND VIDEO FES-

## TIVAL

La Grange Park, Illinois  
Deadline: January 5

## 5TH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ANIMATED FILM

Stuttgart, Germany  
Deadline: January 7

## 2ND FESTIVAL INTERNACIONAL DE CINEMA DA COSTA DO ESTO- RIL

Cascais, Portugal  
Deadline: January 19

## FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DE FILMS ET VIDEOS DE FEMMES

Montreal, Quebec  
Deadline: February

## YORKTON SHORT FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL

Yorkton, Saskatchewan  
Deadline: April 2

## 3RD INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FESTIVAL

Hiroshima, Japan  
Deadline: March 20

## 37TH SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

Sydney, Australia Deadline: March 31



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