



drive-thru

reviews

crusin' the indies' with LIFT

LIFT

THE LIAISON OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS OF TORONTO
MAY/JUNE 1996 VOL.16 NO.3.

LIFT

THE LIAISON OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS OF TORONTO

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THANKS TO:

Laura Cowell and Deborah Melrines

The LIAISON OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS OF TORONTO is a non-profit co-operative which supports and encourages independent filmmaking through the exchange of information and access to equipment and facilities. LIFT hosts a program of workshops and monthly screenings and it provides access to information regarding funding sources, festival and grant deadlines and other related matters.

LIFT is supported by its membership, the Canada Council (Media Arts Section), the Ontario Arts Council, Metro Council Cultural Affairs Division, the City of Toronto through the Toronto Arts Council, the National Film Board of Canada, Telefilm, the Ontario Film Development Corporation, the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation.

Articles published in the LIFT newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors, the Co-op or members of the Board of Directors. Letters to the editor can be sent c/o LIFT, 37 Hanna Avenue, Suite 301, Toronto, Ontario M6K 1W5, Phone, 588-6444; Fax, 588-7017.

LIFT's website was incorrectly addressed in our last issue.

The correct address is:

<http://www.inforamp.net/~lift>

e-mail: lift@inforamp.net

Anyone with questions, suggestions or ideas, please call Lisa at the LIFT office, or e-mail us.

DO YOU HAVE e-mail???

Send us your e-mail address and let us know if you would be interested in receiving your bi-monthly mailing by e-mail in the near future. You can e-mail the info to us at lift@inforamp.net

editorial

June 4-9, 1996

5 days of international and canadian films

toronto worldwide short film festival

Annual lesbian & gay film & video festival of Toronto

May 23 to June

PROGRAM GUIDE

The point is you don't dumb down your films to make them more successful.

filmmaker Craig Baldwin, in an interview with LIFT's Jason McBride

message from the chair

Dear LIFT Members:

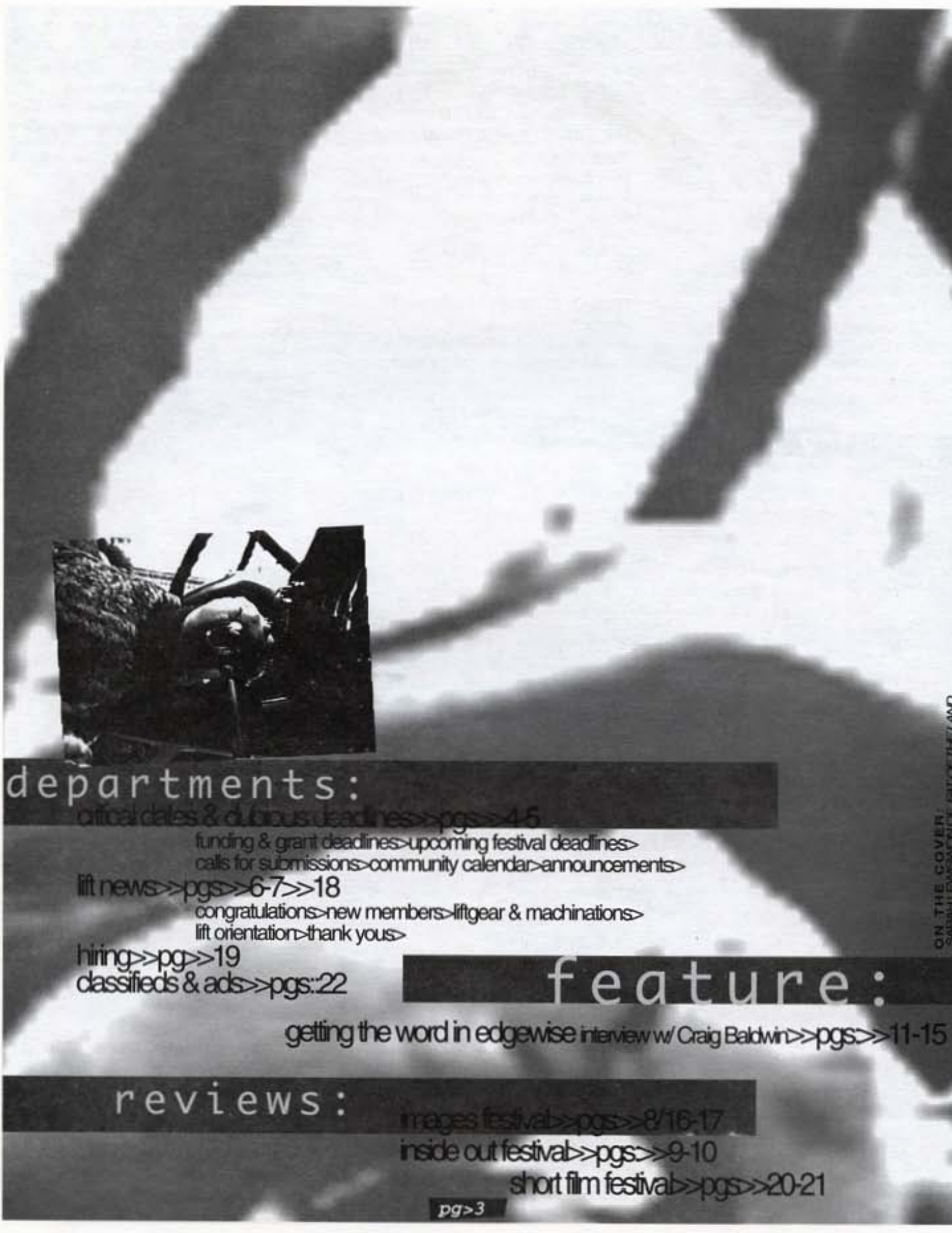
Welcome to Spring and Festival fever. This year LIFT is proud to be a sponsor of Asian Heritage Month, Images and the Inside/Out Lesbian and Gay Film and Video Festivals. Congratulations to the LIFT members whose films were shown in these festivals.

Update on equipment: Pro Tools is on its way to LIFT. The purchase of this system represents a major technological addition to LIFT's equipment holdings and a great opportunity for members wanting to create a complex soundmix right here

at LIFT. Greg and Lisa have spent 3 days at a dedicated ProTools workshop and will be able to provide technical support to the members. Workshops for members to get oriented on the system will be along shortly.

The next thing coming up on the events calendar is the silent auction and Ward's Island screening. The list of enticing items to be auctioned off will be sent out soon, so keep an eye out for it and be sure to come down to watch LIFT members' films on Ward's Island under — and beside — the stars...

Until next time,
Hope Thompson
LIFT Chair



ON THE COVER:
SARAH HLEWIS/NOVA / PAT OF THE LAND

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critical dates & dubious deadlines

funding & grant deadlines:

ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL

No deadlines confirmed at press time. For more info., contact the Film, Media Arts Office, Ontario Arts Council: 151 Bloor St. W., Toronto, ON, M5S 1T6. Phone: 969-7450 or 1-800-387-0058. Acting Grants Co-ordinator, Dan Lander.

CANADA COUNCIL

Film Production and Creative Development Grants: **July 15**, November 15 (contact Leuten Rojas, ext. 5541)
 First Productions In Media Arts: **Sept. 1** (contact David Poole ext. 4253)
 For more information, contact: The Canada Council, P.O. Box 1047, Ottawa, ON, K1P 5V8. Phone: 1-800-263-5588.

FUND (FOUNDATION TO UNDERWRITE NEW DRAMA FOR TELEVISION):

Script Development Programme & Senior Projects Programme: **July 5**
 For further information and guidelines/application forms, contact:
 FUND, BCE Place 1818 Bay St., Box 787, M5J 2T3. Phone: 956-5431.

BRAVO! STARTS BRAVO! FACT:

BRAVO! has launched a new foundation, Bravo!FACT, to assist Canadian talent by offering financial assistance and incentive for the promotion, development, production, and exhibition of Canadian-made shorts form arts video, in all man-

ner of disciplines and modes of expression, and to stimulate public interest in and appreciation of the arts on television. Awards can cover up to 50% of the budget, up to \$25,000. Upcoming deadlines: **June 28**, contact Marie Lalonde for more info: 591-5757, ext. 2734.

ONTARIO FILM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION:

Writing and filmmaking programs on hold. Call 314-6858 for information on professional development and the new Ontario tax credit.

CANADIAN INDEPENT FILM & VIDEO FUND:

No upcoming deadlines confirmed. For more information, contact: Robin Jackson, 666 Kirkwood Ave., Suite 203, Ottawa, ON K1Z 5X9. Tel: (613) 729-1900, Fax: (613) 729-4610

upcoming festival deadlines:

*Guidelines and application forms for the following festivals are on file and available for photocopying (10¢ a page) at the LIFT office. As much as we'd like to, LIFT staff cannot take the time out to fax forms to members. Please do not ask. If you are unable to make it into the LIFT office, you will have to call the festival directly to request an application form. *JUST IN: 1996 edition of the AIVF Guide to International Film & Video Festivals. An invaluable resource for planning your festival entries for the upcoming year. Available as an in-house resource for all LIFT mem-

FESTIVAL

Breckenridge Fest. of Film (Colorado, September 19-22)
 Valladolid Int'l Film Fest. (Spain, Oct. 18-26)
 Upsala Int'l Short Film Fest. (Sweden, Oct. 22-27)
 Ottawa Int'l Animation Fest. (October 2-6)
 Montreal World Film Fest. (Aug. 22-Sept. 2)
 Chicago Int'l Film Fest. (Illinois, Oct. 6-23)
 International Emmy Awards (New York, Nov. 21)
 Cork Film Fest. (Ireland, Oct. 6-13)
 Vancouver Int'l Film Fest. (Oct. 4-20)
 Lisbon Figueira da Foz Int'l Film Fest. (Portugal, Sept. 5-15)
 Berlin Int'l Gay & Lesbian Film Fest. (Germany, Nov. 6-13)
 San Sebastian Int'l Film Fest. (Spain, Sept. 19-28)
 Mannheim-Heidelberg Int'l Film Fest. (Germany, Oct. 11-19)
 Riminicina Int'l Independent Short Film Fest. (Italy, Sept. 24-29)
 Flanders Int'l Film Fest. (Ghent, Belgium, Oct. 8-19)
 Saint Louis Film Fest. (Missouri, Nov. '96)
 Varna Int'l Film Fest. (Bulgaria, Aug. 30-Sept. 5)
 Cabbagetown Film & Video Fest. (Toronto, Sept. 4-5)
 Japan Prize Int'l Educational Program Contest
 Turin Int'l Fest. of Young Cinema (Italy, Nov. 15-23)
 Brno Sixteen Film & Video Fest. (Czech Republic, Oct. 17-220)
 Abitibi-Temiscamingue Int'l Film Fest. (Quebec, Oct. 26-31)
 Toulon Maritime & Exploration Int'l Film Fest. (France, Nov. 13-17)
 Sao Paulo Int'l Film Fest. (Brazil, Oct. 18-Nov. 1)
 Stockholm Int'l Film Fest. (Sweden, Nov. 8-17)
 Banff Fest. of Mountain Films (Alberta, Nov. 1-3)
 Antibes Underwater World Film Fest. (France, Oct. 30-Nov. 3)
 Poitiers Henri Langlois Int'l Film Fest. (France, Dec. 2-8)
 CSIF \$100 Film Fest. (Calgary, Alberta, Nov. 14-16)

DEADLINE

TELEPHONE

June 30 (970) 453-6200
 June 30 +34-83-305 700
 July 1 (0) 18-12 0025
 July 1 (613) 232-6727
 July 5 (514) 848-3883
 July 12 (312) 644-3400
 July 12 n/a
 July 15 (353) 21 271711
 July 15 (604) 685-0260
 July 15 1/812.62.31
 July 31 0049-30-442 98 91
 July 31 34.43.48.12.12
 Aug. 1 49 (0) 621-102943
 Aug. 10 0541/26399-22627
 Aug. 10 31-91-21.89.46
 Aug. 15 (314) 726-6779
 Aug. 15 (052) 2-13-31
 Aug. 27 921-0857
 Aug. 29 03-3465-6199
 Aug. 31 +39-11-5623309
 Sept. 1 +42-5-4221 4625
 Sept. 2 (819) 762-6212
 Sept. 7 (33) 94 92 99 22
 Sept. 10 (55-11) 883.5137
 Sept. 12 +46 8 20 05 50
 Sept. 13 (403) 762-6441
 Sept. 15 33-93 61 45 45
 Sept. 30 49 41 80 00
 Oct. 15 (403) 277-1741

critical dates & obvious deadlines

calls for submissions:

CELAFI 1997 First National Short Film & Video Award:

"Celebrating African Identity: Entering The Millennium" is the theme of the Canadian Artists Network: Black Artists In Action (CAN:BAIA) 1997 International Conference & Festival, to be held in Toronto, Jul 9-13, 1997. The CELAFI's First National Short (3-5 min.) Film & Video Award is a program of works by African Canadian Film and Video artists which deals with the issue and resolutions to African descendants in the new world. In addition to the awards, approximately 25 works will be selected for screening during CELAFI 1997. First Prize is \$500, and the First Runner Up will receive \$300.

Eligibility: All genres of film and video: experimental, documentary, animation, comedy, drama, and hybrids thereof. Only one submission per artist; works in languages other than English are welcomed; films and video must have been produced after Jan. 1, 1994. **Entry Criteria:** A 1/2" VHS preview tape; a brief description/synopsis of the work; a screening list, a list of production credits, a production still; artist's biography and a video/filmography; evidence of/or interest in CAN:BAIA membership; 2 SASE's (for receipt acknowledgement and materials return). **Deadline: October 15, 1996.** For more info., or to submit, contact: CELAFI 1997 Film & Video Committee, c/o CAN:BAIA, 54 Wolseley St., 2nd Floor, Toronto, ON M5T 1A5, PH: 703-9040, FX: 703-0059

DISCOVERY CHANNEL ASIA:

Discovery Channel Asia acquires approximately 40% of the documentaries and education programs it broadcasts. They are interested in acquiring quality programs that fall in the categories of History, Science & Technology, World Cultures and Adventures. No news, no sports, but programs that are

educational. Several multilingual professionals on staff at Discovery Channel Asia are Canadian. They welcome your queries on program acquisition or co-productions at the following address: Discovery Channel Asia, Inc., 3/F Baskerville House, 13 Duddell Street, Central, Hong Kong, Fax: (852) 2810.8456, Attn: Kevin-John McIntyre, Senior VP & General Manager

ANIMATED FILMS WANTED FOR INTERNATIONAL TELEVISION:

Jolt Television Productions Inc. is putting together a new compilation of animated films for the international home video, broadcast, and related markets. If you are an independent animator who would like to have your work considered for such a package, Jolt TV wants to hear from you! If your work is selected, they offer: potential national and international exposure; payment for your efforts; inclusion in the international database of filmmakers that they make available to networks, producers, etc. Send your work right away on videocassette (1/2" VHS, 3/4, or Beta SP). For further information, please contact Jolt TV Productions at the following address: Canadian Film Institute, 2 Daly, Suite 140, Ottawa, ON K1N 6E2. Fax: (613) 232-6315, Tel: (613) 232-8769. e-mail: aj899@freenet.carleton.ca Web: HTTP://www.DocuWeb.ca/CFI-OttAniFest/

WTN'S SHAMELESS SHORTS:

The Women's Television Network is looking for short films and videos by Canadian and international directors and producers. This program showcases work created by women or work which portrays women's perspectives, stories and interests. All shorts 15 minutes or less, including drama, animation, documentary, and experimental, will be accepted for preview. Just send a VHS copy of the work along with any appropriate publicity material. Laura Michalchyshun, Programming Director, WTN, P.O. Box 158, Station L, Winnipeg, MB, R3H 0Z5.

HALLWALLS MEDIA PROGRAM:

Video/performance, film, multimedia, digital media and internet projects wanted for ongoing exhibitions/ screenings/installations. They also accept proposals from video & digital artists for residencies which includes access to Hallwalls' video and digital editing facilities and internet services. Work produced through these residencies will be exhibited at Hallwalls. Submit preview tapes, proposals, resume, support material & SASE. For more info., contact Gail Mentlik, Media Program, Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center, 2495 Main St., suite 425, Buffalo, NY 14214, Tel: (716) 835-7362, Fax: (716) 835-7364, email: Hallwall@Localnet.com Internet: <http://freenet.buffalo.edu/~hallwall>

THE INDEPENDENT EYE:

The Independent Eye, a prime time slot on Knowledge Network (BC's educational broadcaster), is looking for examples of Canada's best independently-produced short drama and animation. If you have a unique, creative and entertaining short drama or animated work, send a VHS copy, along with the appropriate publicity material. Programming preference is for work 30 minutes or less, and all entries will be screened by the programmers. License fees negotiated upon acceptance (please ensure all rights have been cleared for television prior to submission). Judy Robertson, The Independent Eye, Knowledge Network, 4355 Mathissi Place, Burnaby, BC, V5G 5S8. Ph: (604) 431-3224, Fx: (604) 431-3387.

community calendar:

July 13th: LIFT Auction and Island screening. See Flyer this issue.

announcements:

Thanks to Deborah Mc Innes, the LIFT Newsletter is now being printed by SRC Printing!

new members:

Welcome new members
as of April 18- June 5.

- Mario Amaral
- Gaylyn Britton
- Pamela Brown
- Keith Brumby
- Mary Ann Cassidy
- Zan Chandler
- Angie Cheng
- Randall Cole
- Frank Cunha
- Mungo Dobbie
- Paul Gentleman
- John Graham
- Gerard Grant
- Laurence Green
- Adam Hachey
- Garth Hagey
- Noel Harris
- Enayet Karim
- Katarzyna Kochany
- Karen Levenson-Code
- Soo Lyu
- Scott McLaren
- Jeff Moore
- Judith Pyke
- Lindsay Small
- Steve Topping-Johnson
- Stephen Traynor

congratulations:

Congratulations to LIFTer Allyson Woodrooffe and Roger Pepler on the birth of their second child, Julia Grace. Allyson also recently completed her film, *Standing on Fishes*. Look out for it at July's Island Screening.

CURTAINS has just returned from the Yorkton Film and Video Festival with three Golden Sheaf Awards:

- to James Cameron for Best Art Direction
- to Stephanie Morgenstern for Best Script (accompanied by \$1000 cheque from Superchannel towards her next script)
- to Mark and Stephanie Morgenstern for Best Direction

It also had Golden Sheaf Nominations in the following categories:

- to Mark Morgenstern for Best Cinematography
- to Stephanie and Mark Morgenstern for Best Drama Under 30 minutes

It has also been sold to CBC's *Canadian Reflections* and *Open Wide*, and will have travelled to 15 festivals in the last 10 months, including the Toronto Worldwide Short Film Festival.

liftgear & machinations:

What's new with equipment @ LIFT?

PRO TOOLS IS COMING:

Have you heard the news that LIFT will be acquiring a Pro Tools system this summer? What is Pro Tools?, you may ask. Well, it is a digital, non-linear sound editing/mixing workstation made by Digidesign, a company owned by AVID. The system works like an AVID, using an Apple computer and special hardware and software that records multi-track digital audio directly to hard disk. Why is this so great? Because it allows you to record up to 48 tracks of audio (8 of which can be played back at

once), edit it on screen, set volume and pan levels, and mix it down to one track. And if you don't like the resultant mix, you can go back and adjust it, and do it all over again, in just minutes. The system is easy to use, once you learn the basics. LIFT will be offering workshops once the system is up and running. There will be an article in the next newsletter giving more details on the power and versatility of this technology. If you have any questions, call Lisa or Greg at the LIFT office.

lift orientation:

Wednesday, July 17, 1996
11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
37 Hanna Ave., Suite 301

LIFT will be hosting an orientation session for individuals interested in joining the co-op, as well as for any members who haven't yet familiarized themselves with LIFT's facilities and resources. The Membership Co-ordinator will introduce attendees to the LIFT staff and will show everyone how to access the various hands-on information resources (funding files, festival and crew lists, etc.) and will answer specific questions regarding resources, membership structure and policy, etc., or more general ones regarding how to get more involved in the co-op and it's activi-

ties. The Equipment Co-ordinators will take everyone on a short tour of LIFT's facilities (editing rooms, sound transfer room, Oxberry animation stand/optical printer) go over the equipment resources, explain equipment booking policies and procedures, and answer questions regarding LIFT production equipment and post-production facilities. An orientation of the Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre will also be conducted for interested individuals.

Space is limited, so call to reserve a spot.
LIFT: 588-6444

thank you:

LIFT NEWSLETTER THANK YOU

The CFMDC would like to extend great thanks to LIFT for their wonderful neighbourliness over the fundraising party at the end of April: the inclusion of the flyer in the newsletter, lending lights, grip stands, a table, reels, and ice buckets for the beer! Without LIFT's help, the event might not have gone as smoothly. The silent auction was a success, raising \$3600.00. Thanks to all who came out. The LIFT/CFMDC alliance is of fundamental importance to the indie film scene in Toronto.

The LIFT Newsletter would also like to thank: Production Services, roscos gels, Black Arrow Productions Incorporated and the t.v. series *Ready or Not* for their participation in the hit LIFT workshop *Grips and Electrics: the Basics*.

Instructors Julie Ouellon (an electric and sometimes gaffer in the industry) and Rita (the grip co-instructor) showed off their tool belts, then discussed gels, diffusion, colour temperature, distribution, balancing a load

and safety. Participants in the workshop learned how to tie knots; set up c-stands; change bulbs, set up and strike different scenarios; lay and wrap seaway cable, distribution boxes, joy; conform gels; set up an HMI and silk; side-arm a blonde and magic arm a frame in front of it; level tripods and track; place a zip on a base plate; set a tungsten fixture and use nets or flags to manipulate its output, and install a polecat and place peppers on it.

Special thanks go to those listed below.

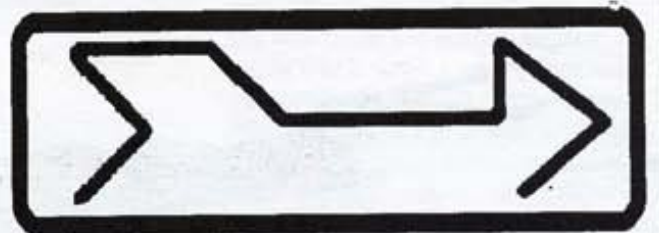


Production Services Ltd.

Cinevillage • 65 Heward Avenue • Toronto • Canada • M4M 2T5
Tel: (416) 466-0037 • Toll Free: (800) 461-0037 • Fax: (416) 466-9612



BLACK ARROW PRODUCTONS INCORPORATED



April 20, 1996



"So, are your parents coming?" by Sarah Abbott

This question was asked of filmmaker Janine Fung shortly before she participated in an Artist's Talk to discuss the presence of the family in art, part of the programme Mike Hoolboom curated for Images '96. Fung was thankful her parents had a trip planned; but I thought they would surely understand being fucked up by a family.

Hoolboom snatched the title from Philip Larkin's poem, *This Be the Verse*, and put together a panel and two screenings that proved to be highlights of the festival. The riveting panel churned up so many issues that all present kicked themselves for not bringing recording devices.

It was the content of the films and the discussion that made the event particularly memorable. Issues directly addressed included confession, sexuality, family roles, race, class and the childhood idea that one's family is not necessarily one's biological family. Richard Fung, writer/videomaker, and Kathleen Pirrie Adams, writer/filmmaker, shared childhood fantasies that their families were not their "real" families, speculating that

the real version would be definitely richer, more beautiful and a heck of a lot nicer.

Jeanne Randolph, who applies psychoanalysis to visual culture, took us into the family via *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* with the notion that attempting to wake up before your time just invites punishment from the family, who would prefer to sleep. Janine Fung marked this waking-up point as the realization that one's family role is not what the rest of the family perceives it to be.

Sexuality is often at the root of role-breaking and confession because, in the words of artist and freelance writer Carol Laing, life, with all its sex, does not fit into the ideals parents' have for their children.

These topics wove solidly through the screenings; individual films took up where the panel left off, such as Kika Thorne's *Sorry Suicide Girl* (1992) and *The Beautiful Ones* (1991) by Jeffrey C. Wray, which both deal with family deaths, reminding us that the spirits of loved ones return in unexpected ways.

The matter of silence surrounding race and class history in the family was raised both in the panel's audience and in *Pretending We are Indians* (1988) by Katharine Asals. A great grandmother is said to have been raped by a native man to hide a bi-racial romance. The son becomes a

wealthy business person who looks after his mother, but refuses to introduce her to his friends for fear of their questions.

In *In the Form of the Letter X* (1985) we are faced with a sense of suspension in life that orphan and filmmaker Mike Cartmell experiences, while Peter Greenaway's *H is For House* (1976) takes us back down the garden path to family bliss. Greenaway constructs his film the way a child learns: in chunks that eventually fall together, here forming a picture of the family a child knows before outside realities challenge its role.

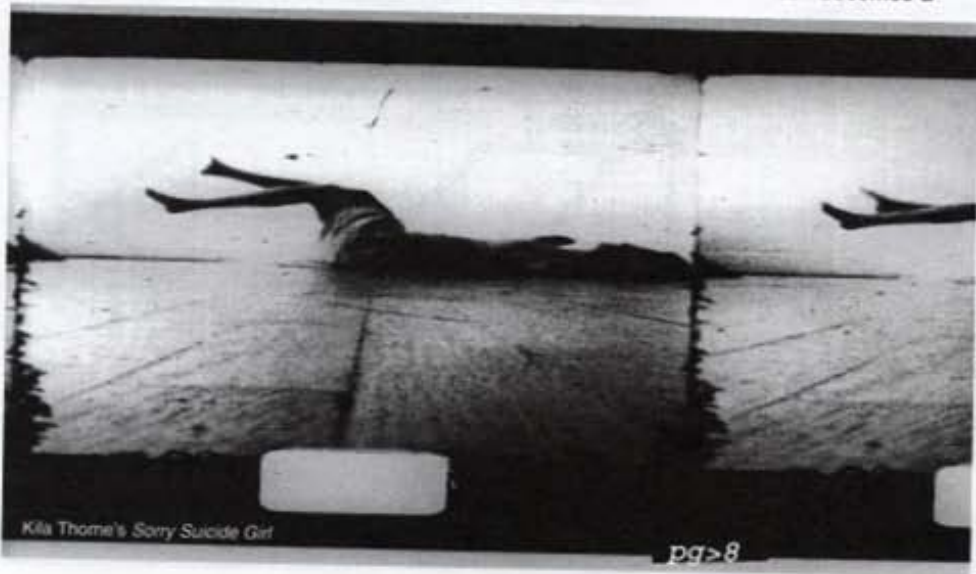
Hoolboom chose well in curating Kurt Kren's *Mama and Papa: An Otto Muehl Happening* (1964) as its montage of naked bodies slathered in gooey food represents any sexual confession that might throw a spanner in the family works.

Asparagus (1979), an incredible work of animation by Suzan Pitt, portrays the act of confession directly. A woman wanders her empty house, repressing her sexual desires until she packs into a bag all of society's limiting conventions and heads to the theatre. Unnoticed, she slips backstage and opens her bag. Images drift over an intrigued audience. Without a word, the woman slips out and returns to her secret asparagus garden where she is able to fulfill her sexual needs.

Closing the programme was Matthias Muller's *Home Stories* (1991). Women from American films from the 50's repeat similar actions centered around a house (or the home), building a sense of alarm.

Expressions of shock and horror permeate the screen - one could infer that the women now find themselves in the position of fucking up a family the way they, in their younger days, vowed they never would.

Kathleen Pirrie Adams believes the mission of adulthood is to make peace with one's family. As the programme demonstrated, art provides a healthy vehicle for this mission - for both creators and viewers. For Hoolboom, the personal film is confession, not only to the world, but, harder still, to one's family. And to quote Richard Fung, artwork dealing with personal issues "does not glorify or denunciate, but leads to healing."



Kika Thorne's *Sorry Suicide Girl*

inside out fest> picks & pans

by Jason Romilly



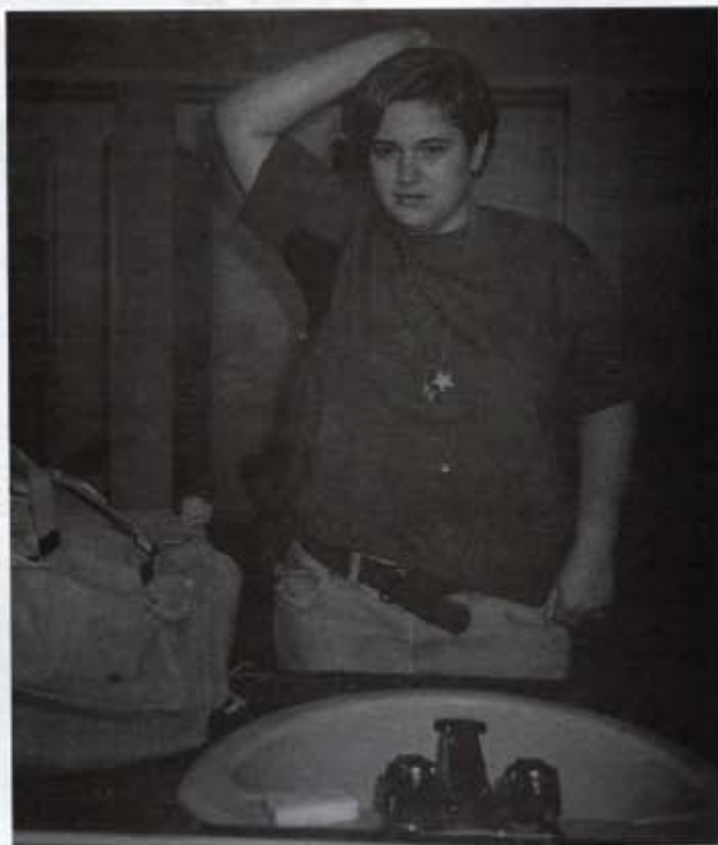
The sixth annual Lesbian and Gay Film and Video Festival of Toronto (how's that for a long title) was held from May 23rd to June 2nd. Once again, the festival was a success with several sell-out shows and astounding programmes. It was especially nice seeing films at the Metropolitan Cinema again before it is developed into high price condos. So here is a day by day rundown of the highlights of the Festival, including several LIFT member's films which, as usual, brought the house down.

May 23 - *Menmaniacs* is a feature-length documentary on two leather men competitions in the states. There were some interesting insights into the whole leather scene (like many of the participants are bottoms) but I expected some good raunch. Instead, it was a "leather men are people too" documentary showing how leather men feel as much as anyone else, even though they have a slave in the basement. The short before was also from the U.S. and was called Jonathan and David. It was basically porn, but I prefer porn without biblical quotations and arty (read dark) lighting.

May 24 - I was supposed to go and see the Femme Fetish and Fiction programme, but it was hot and I saw someone I know on the street and we started drinking on a patio... well, one thing led to another. I should mention that the fantastic short film *Curtains* by LIFT members Stephanie Morgenstern and Mark Morgenstern was part of the programme. I have already raved about the film in a previous newsletter and it is definitely a gem.

May 25 - *Love vs. the Law* was a programme of three provocative short documentaries. The first was a video called *Would you Hide Them?* by LIFT members Lee Shane and Petra Janopaul. The video posed one question to several people with

Lisa Hayes' film *Dike* a charming tale of overcoming the fear of flop sweat.



disturbing results: would you hide someone who was being persecuted for who they were not what they'd done? *Little Sister's and Big Brother* was also by a LIFT member, Jason McBride, and was a look at the important issue of Vancouver bookstore Little Sister's struggle with Canada Customs. *Jim Loves Jack: The James Egan Story* by David Adkin was an absolute delight. The video documents the life of gay activist James Egan, from his groundbreaking newspaper articles through to his recent fight for same sex benefits for his lifetime partner Jack. Look for the documentary on Vision.

May 25 - the *Boy's Camp* programme had so many shorts in it that I will just mention some of the best. My favourites were the films *Prague* by Patrick Snee and *My Polish Waiter* by Terracino. They were both filmed in black and white and had a droll sense of humour which New Yorkers seem to excel at, very much like the films of Jim Jarmusch and Hal Hartley. *Drag Attack* and

Let me Be Your Underwear by Mario Soldo and Ken Kruger provided an overdose of magaglamour with two drag queens terrorizing the globe as rock video goddesses/supermodels. *One Night in Heaven* by Wayne Yung was a very funny, sexy nightmarish version of a karaoke video.

May 29 - *Hometown Heroes* was definitely a showcase for the diversity of talent among the members of LIFT. I finally got to see Wrik Mead and Isabelle Auger's (ab)NORMAL which could be deciphered in many different ways but to me it showed the extreme horror of a long term relationship. The film was creepy and innovative in its use of animated techniques. Jeff Moore's *If You Don't Like It, Don't Call* had a man talking directly to the camera about his difficulties in starting a relationship, but the reason why he has problems is really far out there. *Not Alone: A Halloween Romance* by Paul Hasick was a crowd-pleasing romantic comedy which was well acted and shot. *Crossing the Line* by Hope Thompson focuses on a



inside out fest> picks & pans

cont...

killer of debutantes and has an amusingly black surprise ending. My favourite video in the programme was *Cool* by Michael Achtman because I could completely sympathize with trying desperately to be cool but always ending up feeling totally pathetic.

May 30 - I saw two feature films that were both flawed but had incredible parts. *Butterfly Kiss* was another film in the long line of lesbian serial killer films. There was not that much to set it apart from the likes of *Fun* and *Heavenly Creatures*. The main thing that makes the film work is the stunning performances by Amanda Plummer and Saskia Reeves. Rarely do name actors take so many risks on film. The film should be playing in Toronto as the newsletter comes through your mail slot and is worth catching. *Under Heat* suffered from being too much like a stage play, and the script seemed slightly forced (mom's got a lump in her breast and is an alcoholic, one son has AIDS, and saw his father commit suicide, the other son is a heroin addict). The film does, however, have some very good explosive emotional moments and never goes into saccharine territory, preferring to remain downbeat and true to the characters.

May 31 - *All You Can Eat* was a smorgasboard of films with lesbian themes, three of them by LIFT members: *Sorry Suicide Sister* was another work of insanity by Kika Thorne which had the music of Hole, masturbation and general freakiness. It was pure rock 'n roll. *Why I'll Never Trust You* by Cassandra Nicolau showed the danger of being involved with a bisexual (I know this story all too well), it featured stunning cinematography by Kim Derko and a starring role by Stephanie Morgenstern (winning the award for most LIFT members involved in a single production). Beloved LIFT staff member Lisa Hayes' film *Dike* was a very charming tale of overcoming the fear of flop sweat. The film also features the cinematography of LIFT member Carolyn Wong and was such a crowd favourite that it played at the best of the fest on Sunday.



Amanda Plummer and Saskia Reeves in *Butterfly Kiss*

June 1 - *Pioneering Perverts* featured two shorts that explored new avenues in documentary filmmaking. The first was Richard Fung's *Dirty Laundry* which mixed fictional footage of an Asian man researching his history while travelling on a train and a documentary about the first Chinese Canadian immigrants who worked on building the railroad. The video weaved documentary and fiction together seamlessly and won the award for best Canadian film or video in the festival. *After the Bath* was a very good documentary on an alleged child pornography ring in Ontario and exposes the homophobia and double standards the police used in dealing with the case. LIFT member John Greyson does an excellent job with an

abundance of interviews from those involved with both sides of the issue, which puts many so-called news shows to shame.

Midi Onadera's *Skin Deep* also played on June 1 but I've already seen it twice and it has been covered many times in the newsletter — it is another must-see. I missed Michelle Mohabeer's *Two*, but I am sure we will be seeing more about Michelle in upcoming issues of the newsletter.

Until next year...

Jason Romilly is a filmmaker and bon vivant.

getting the word in edge-wise

by Jason Mc Bride

an interview with Craig Baldwin

shoptalk:

Archivist, activist, and self-confessed "film bum" Craig Baldwin, has created a body of work that, in his words, reclaims, redeems and reappropriates film history. From early works such as *RocketKitKongoKit* to the cult hit *Tribulation 99: American Anomalies Under America*, Baldwin has wittily reimagined American history by way of the cinema that has simultaneously represented and produced this history. Employing a vast repertoire of found footage fragments (industrials, commercials, propaganda and B-movies), woven into an ingenious and humorous tapestry, he manages to create a radical and highly intelligent critique of American imperialism (and how it manifests itself both through its military and its media).

His most recent feature, *Sonic Outlaws*, is an experimental documentary concerned with the very practice that his films utilise and promote. Consisting of interviews with appropriation artists Negativland, Emergency Broadcast Network, The Barbie Liberation Organization, and others—as well as found footage and a dizzying array of film and video formats—*SO* explores the nature of artistic appropriation and collage and its place in 20th-century art.

Baldwin was the spotlight director at this year's Images festival, where he presented two programmes of his work as well as an extremely informative and entertaining artist's talk.

For more information about his films, write to: 992 Valencia, San Francisco, CA 94110 USA.

Someone once asked Donald Barthelme why he wrote the way that he did and said "Because Samuel Beckett already wrote the way he did." So I'll ask you a similar question: why do you make films the way you do?

Well, Beckett did it his way, Barthelme did it his way, and I'll do it my way. I can't think of anything more clever than that. The point is that it's an authentic artist's demonstration of my nervous system, my sensibility, on film. Why do I do it? Because it just comes to me naturally, just like if I raise my voice in song it's going to come out a certain way because of the way by vocal cords are. So, in a way, I don't feel like I'm in such control. I mean, it's totally part of my lifestyle, you know, it's like a trace. A sign of me adapting to the media landscape is that trace, that thumb print, that footprint, that tire-track. It just really represents my sensibility, which is scattered, fragmented, schizophrenic, distracted, busy, working hard, obsessive. It's also really reflective of my position in the world, which is marginalized. And rather than work for a studio and get the grants and make a perfect film, I'd rather make a film that speaks of my condition. I'm proud of my condition which, as I say, is a confused amalgam of film and video, clip art, images from bad movies and a kind of humour and rage seething through it all.

I'm proud of my condition which, as I say, is a confused amalgam of film and video, clip art, images from bad movies and a kind of humour and rage seething through it all.

interview with Craig Baldwin..cont...

In your artist's talk you presented a brief survey of collage film, from Frank Capra to the Situationists to

Bruce Conner to Bryan Springer. How do you see your films, your project, as being different from theirs? Is it the treatment of language? Do you see your films as being a progression of the art form?

Art form is kind of a loaded phrase. I do see them as being a progression of a form, but that's not to say that the form has to develop in one direction. That's the modernist conceit. The point is that it explodes, moves in all directions. So I've just moved, because of a basis in political activism, to be more specific about the Zeitgeist. See, I want to have it both ways. I want to have it metaphorical, speak with specific images (like Conner does) that ring out and that represent all the industrial development in the Third World with one gesture, but I also want to sort of play the journalist as well and, again, maybe raise consciousness, give information, educate people, tell histories. I think Conner is a little...I called him coy once. I guess ironic would be the word (and certainly my films are ironic), but I just don't think ironic is enough. I think now we're past the point of irony and we can certainly use irony, but there has to be more of an active engagement.

I'm more interested in doing something more *approaching* a documentary—as far as *Spin* [Bryan Springer's humorous "representation" of live satellite feeds] or the other stuff, there's not enough *treatment* of the material in that case. Like Bryan Springer, a lot of video is just letting the person speak, talking head interviews are the best example. There's a lot of talking head material in *Spin*. And that's fine because it's good material. But I also have this love of the plastic nature of film, and that's what you see with me a lot. Double exposure, these effects, you know with weird dots and graphics. That's kind of a painterly thing, or collage. I mean there's examples, I'm sure there's collages on the walls here. It's a cut and paste kind of thing, an arts and crafts almost kind of thing. That's why I prefer film to video, because video ultimately is distanced from the hand; you're pushing buttons to make cuts. Whereas film is very much something that's in your hand, it's very malleable, you're working with it. That's my strength. I've never been able to establish a relationship with machines so much, even though film certainly is a technological art form[...] I like the idea of what Bryan Springer is doing, but I'm just trying to make something that has more physical *body* to it. Film, this quality of projection, this dark room, the sensual aspects of it. I'm more of a handmade filmmaker, what do you call it, low-tech, bricolage almost, naive art, or children's art, or folk art, or art of the insane. Things that are put together in a way that borders on ugly, but actually have a certain kind of beauty because it's so raw. They have a presence. The thing with TV, and having your work shown on TV, I wouldn't discount that, but that's not what I'm in this for. I really like the physical experience[...] That's really a big practice of my cinema: the

delirious experience, the sensual experience, the carnal experience. The strobing, the looping, the sensory overload. And rock n' roll! That's definitely part of *Sonic Outlaws*. It's a rock n' roll film. That's what I told the projectionist: turn the sound up!

Yeah, it was loud.

Exactly, it was a physical assault, and if you don't like it, then leave. That's just how I feel about it; it has to be a physical experience. So I place myself between Capra and Conner and between Springer and Conner, not that those are the only two poles. But I do want to have a documentary form that has an aesthetic sensual quality to it, has a physical presence to it.

How about a more popular experimental documentary like Mark Rappaport's *From the Journals of Jean Seberg*?

Brilliant! Really brilliant. I was just hanging out with Rappaport in Turin, Italy. Everybody's been talking about independence. What does independent mean? That term is really up for grabs right now, obviously, I don't have to tell you that. The point is true American independents...Sundance is a good example, are very...(I'm not blaming independents by the way, everyone wants to be successful). Hollywood quickly caught on to them and brought them in. Like Tarantino, he's nothing, he's through. He lost his credibility very quickly. So the point is now that the whole term independent has been rendered meaningless. What represents the true high risk is actually documentary. The whole generation of young documentary makers...So they invited eight of them over there [to Turin] and I was honoured to be among Terry Zwigoff who made *Crumb*, which is a brilliant film, Mark Rappaport, Steve Martin, the guy who made *Theremin*...The point is here are films where you can really learn about history, plus play with montage. They're art films; they look good. They're not made for TV, they're made for theatres.

Rappaport, the first thing he said to me (because I was a big fan of his, I said: "I finally get to meet you"), he says: "You got that *Fair Use* book? Because," he said, "I got to get this to my distributor as soon as possible, I got to read it."

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Yeah, when the film was shown at the Toronto Film Festival, the first question from the audience was "Did you get permission for the clips?" and he said "None of your fucking business."

Yeah, he actually didn't, but it is fair use. There's a perfect example. But hey, who was his model? Godard. The point is, it's criticism. Instead of writing it (although Rappaport does write it), instead of publishing it in a journal, you're using the language of film to criticize film. It's so much more advanced. And he's got the performative thing in there too. The only problem with that was that I wasn't completely sold on the performance. But it's very smart. He's a hero...Is there another film you were thinking about?

Well, I was just going to say Godard's—

Godard is great. Godard's a perfect example of someone who can be maybe the most famous filmmaker in the world, but can also make the most obscure, arty, high-brow, special films. I mean American cinema can never image such a thing, that someone could actually write his own ticket basically. And do what they want. He's actually more in the tradition of a great writer, like James Joyce. You know, we have this idea in literature that someone would write fine literature, but in movies we hardly have this idea that someone could be an artist, a major artist that's going to last and be used for something other than to sell tickets and popcorn.

I want to ask you a specific question about *Sonic Outlaws*. Why

interview with Craig Baldwin..cont.

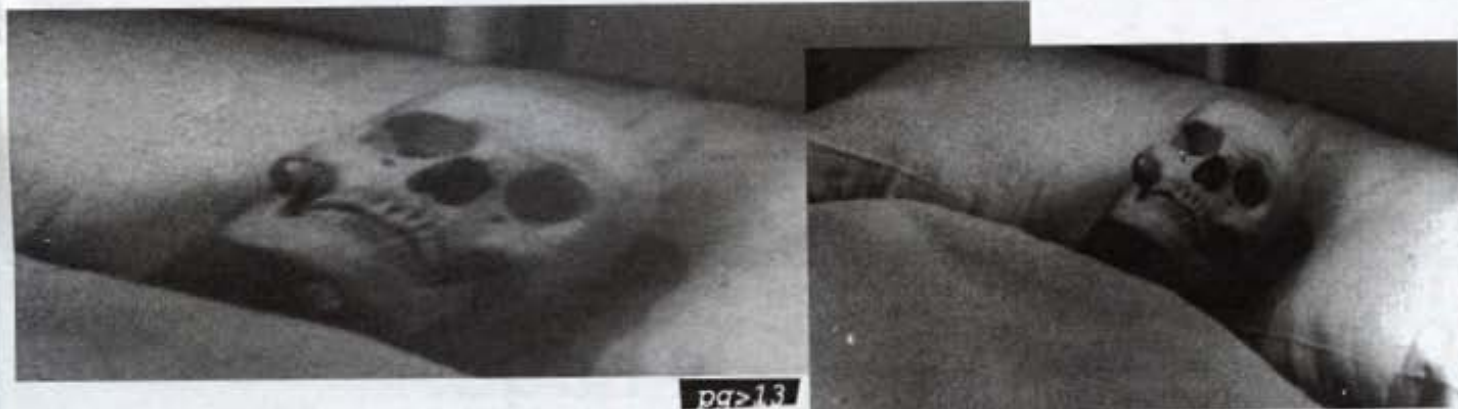
did you choose —maybe it wasn't necessarily a conscious choice — but why did you concentrate specifically on audio appropriation and collage rather than visual or literary collage?

Well, I did include visual, by the way. EBN [Emergency Broadcast Network] is video, as a matter of fact. And I talked about Heartfield [German collagist and political activist] and Dada. The point is, I don't want to reveal all my machinations...See, when you read the description of my film you say that it's about plagiarism and copyright infringement and it sounds very dry. But my film isn't dry. As a matter of fact, it really aggressively engages an audience because, as I said, it's based in rock n' roll. So what I wanted to do was begin my discussion with a popular example, *Negativland* and U2, and then from there I could get into more so called obtuse elements. Then again, it wasn't necessarily all by design. I found myself in this spoken word situation [National Writer's Union conference] that I heard Don Joyce [of *Negativland*] speak at, and I just knew that this sort of critical mass had been reached. This was my point of entry. I just felt that perhaps these examples in popular music were more universal; they resonated and spoke to a larger audience immediately and I wanted to lead with this major scandal in the rock n' roll business before I got to the fine art, visual art details. So it wasn't like I was trying to privilege audio over visual. It was just that the rock n' roll business gave me an entry. It just made sense practically.

You say that your films are a response to both the "fatness" of dominant cinema and the financial leanness of the times, and it would seem to me natural that more people would make films the way you do.

Oh yeah, people do, lots of people do. But you wouldn't know that because of a lot of these people are just learning how to make films, and so they're not distributed. Again, it's like a child drawing, which is not to put it down. In my collage essay class that I teach right now...let's say you want to make a movie but you never made a movie before. If you're going to shoot your own stuff, you're already investing like a hundred dollars in raw stock and a hundred dollars in processing. Are you going to work print it or not? And then you got to pay for space to edit it. When we learn to talk, first of all we learn words from our parents. We don't make words up. So when we put films together, putting a frame here and a frame here, we're learning to organize film, we're learning the language of film. I think doing collage essay exercises are ways of getting into film, understanding the language of film without having to go bankrupt...Getting access to a flatbed, rewinds, a splicer, understanding what a frame is, what emulsion is, what perfs are, what the head and tail of a piece of film are. You learn basically how to work in film

shoptalk:



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interview with Craig Baldwin..cont...

without having to get a Bolex, buy raw stock, establish a relationship with a lab, pay for the shipping, and have it come out basically underexposed or whatever. All that is fine, those are things you have to do. In any event,

these exercises can be an invaluable way of incorporating this language, learning this language.

People are discouraged because production values are so high in the industry that people are embarrassed that their films look funky. They feel self-censored. People can't imagine that you can write with a pencil, or ride a bicycle, or drive an old car, or wear used clothes. They're colonized by Hollywood and its spectacular qualities. They couldn't imagine they would produce something funky looking, used, second-hand. There's a beauty in stuff that is slightly beat, that's shredded or distressed, there's a texture, there's more character in it. They're funky. That's the word for it. So there are people who have an aversion to it, that's why they don't get into it.

I guess you could say that *Sonic Outlaws*, in comparison with your other work, is more of a "straight" documentary. Would you say that you're moving more in that direction or is this film an anomaly?

You act as if I'm completely in control of, completely conscious of what I'm doing. I'm not. The thing is—

Well, I just mean that while in earlier films like *RocketKitKongoKit*, there is obviously an irony there, but it seemed to me a much more

subdued, serious work. *Sonic Outlaws*, on the other hand, seems to me more consciously entertaining and accessible. That's not necessarily a conscious move?

Well, I was an angry young man. I was very pissed off. I was very active in movements for self-determination, not only in Africa but also in Palestine and Latin America. So a lot of my films I saw as pamphlet films, as agit-prop. Even though a lot of these political activists, by the way, weren't into the funkiness of my films because of their ironic style. But I was hoping to marry West Coast funk, collage, arty, loopy, handmade, raw neo-cargo cult style with political activism. What turned me off were political documentaries that had no depth, no irony, that had no humour. I was a Yippie, a punk, a joyous revolutionary. It shouldn't be like going to church, but like yeah, burn it down! So that was very much the aesthetic. My early work was more political, really hard core critiques. That's what *RocketKitKongoKit* is. It is goofy—you see it in some of the shots in there. And it was playful. But really there is a serious tone to it, especially the beginning, and you didn't even see the beginning.

The thing is there are a lot of people making experimental films, and that's great. But I just think it's too late for Stan Brakhage. Not to put him down, he's a great filmmaker, but we have to move on. There has to be more of an engagement, more aggression. The whole punk thing: let's just get down, know your enemy, that kind of thing. Formal play is great, but that's just not enough. So I'm committed to a more political impulse. That doesn't necessarily have to be documentary. I want there to be content. There's so much formal play, not only in experimental film, but, for example, these slick high-tech people interested in designing their web page, but I wonder...sometimes it's just to put a frame around their name. It's pure ego...That's never appealed to me. I see through that. So I want to make documen-

taries that don't fit the definition of documentary. I don't want to admit my own shortcomings, but the earlier three films are really...the balance between the language and the images is too much. I expected the audience to be pushed. It's very over the top; it's excessive. My rationale was, and probably still is, that you don't have to get it all. If you want to get it all, you'd be going to the library, and doing the reading. I give the audience more than they need so if they just get the pattern of US interference then they'll see well, look...I don't have to know if there's 40,000 or 41,000 guns the fact is that the US delivered guns to the Contras, you know, or to Chile, or attempted to kill Castro. That's the point...It's not as cleaned up as I'd like it to be, there's too much language, and dominant visuals. It puts too much of a burden on the eye. Too over-the-top with respect to montage. Perhaps I've matured a little bit. *¡O No Coronado!* is sort of a matured film; it's pretty good.

That's probably my favourite film of yours actually.

Yeah. It actually tries to set up a narrative line, and it looks good. Some of the video stuff bothers me now, but again that was in the right spirit. The thing is with *Sonic Outlaws* that was something...I wasn't just making my own personal alternative statement about these artists. I was entering into the arena, the field of rock journalism...I decided I'd let the principals, the people involved, do their own talking, and follow their testimony. So I lightened up a little bit. There's still all these wild cuts, it's still totally montage. But at the same time, I just let the interviewees do the talking basically. Even though I have to make choices about what's in and what's out. So it does look more like journalism because it was based on interviews. There weren't any interviews in the other ones. The other ones were my research. So it [*Sonic Outlaws*] has a broader appeal.

What I want to do is get more into is leaving behind the angry agitprop, still tinkering with it, but indulging more in storytelling.

That's not to say narrative, but performance, putting a person in front of the camera in deep space and playing more with allegory or metaphor. Gestures that have a kind of meaning, not

It shouldn't be like going to church, but like yeah, burn it down! I just think it's too late for Stan Brakhage.

interview with Craig Baldwin..cont.

shoptalk:

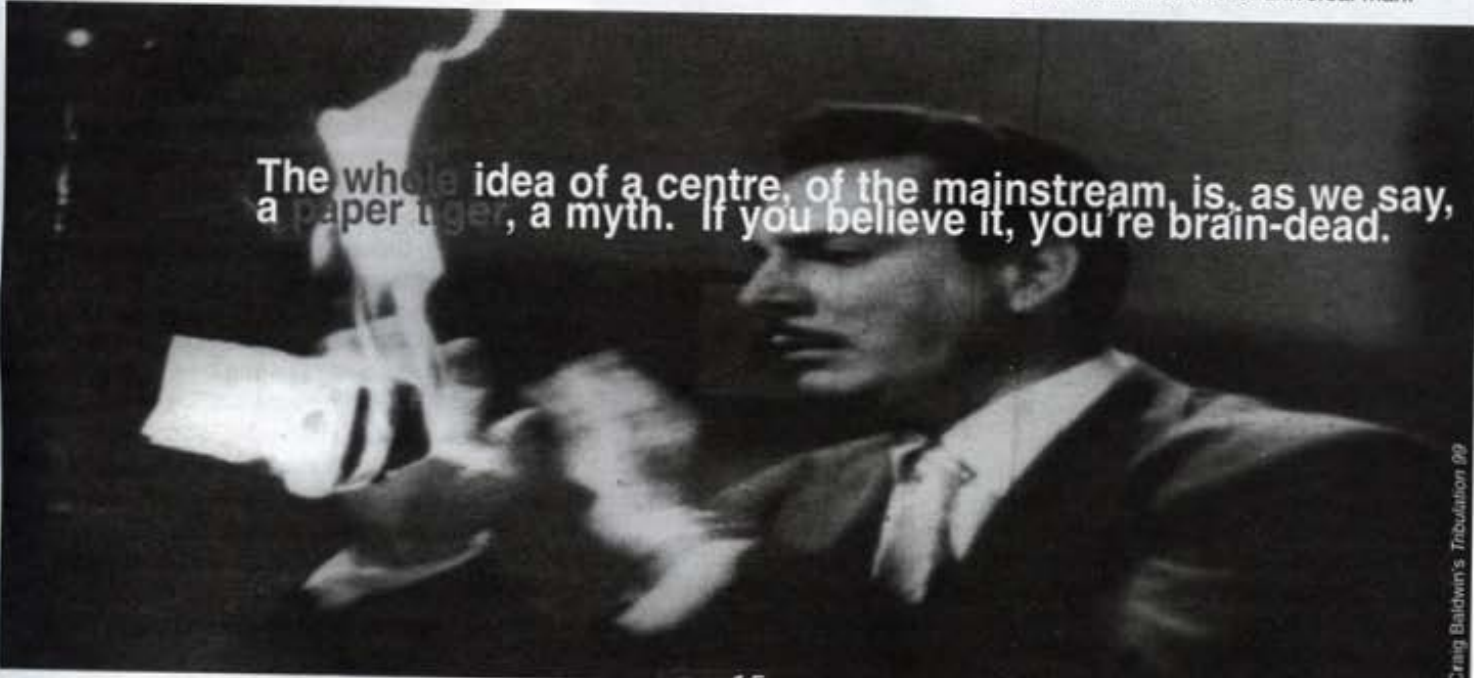
much accessibility do you feel you have to invest in your films if you want them to reach a larger audience and have some sort of political impact?

You know it's a good question, and there's no answer. I was just on *All Things Considered* and the guy asked the same question. We've already gone through that, the question of the centre and the margin, especially in our world. The point is you don't dumb down your films to make them more successful. You want to take people away from the centre. You don't make your movie in the image of the centre; that's compromising. That's decay and conformity. You want to lead people out with a new idea...You challenge people, and you don't underestimate them, you give them credit and respect. You disavow yourself of any illusions of being all things to all people. You can't be that and do that, especially with a low budget. The whole idea of a centre, of the mainstream, is, as we say, a paper tiger, a myth. If you believe it, you're brain-dead. The idea is you have a different model: autonomous audiences. And it's come to be true; that's not just a progressive philosophy. You can make a successful film and all you have to do really is speak to your own community; the whole explosion of the indepen-

dent film scene, and gay and lesbian films, and ethnic identity films. Not that it's necessary to just speak to them, but you can. So the point is not to have the illusion that will play in the mall, and everybody will go to it, but that your film speaks specifically to your audience. I'd rather say things to you which are more meaningful and make more of a difference, then say some very bland, general things to a journalist for a mainstream thing; it would just be pulp, filling the page up...An artist is supposed to make things that are sublime, and beautiful, and refined. You're not supposed to make something that's base. People come to art; they're supposed to be enlightened and lifted up by it. My idea is you don't try to get to a large audience, but recognize that there's an autonomous audience. Self-selected groups, people who identify themselves as lovers of art films, or gay and lesbian films, or Mexican-American films. Sub-groups. And that's all you have to do is reach that audience, identify with your community. This idea of a melting-pot is a certain liberal notion, and it doesn't exist...I think what we're doing is seeing a dismantling of this whole modernist idea of universal man.

just "John went to the restaurant, bought a beer", but that have a larger meaning about the history of radio and TV. But there would actually be a person moving through, not just a philosophical, conceptual thing...I want to play with cinematic space, with miniatures, rear projection. So I'm trying to find a form between documentary and experimental, but using some narrative elements to create fantasy. More like fairy tales. Fairy tales are narrative, they're stories, but they're not like realistic stories. That's the worst thing. I saw this airplane movie coming in, *Beautiful Girls*. I don't know if you heard about or not, but it was the worst. The acting—it just hurts the eyes. It's demeaning to you, as a viewer, to have to engage in all the premises that are beneath that. We're going to pretend, we're going to identify with these very obviously stupid, shallow people. But again, fairy tales are not quite real; they're not supposed to be real. I want to do something that's more allegorical, a moral fable that means something not just you know boy meets girl, following someone around in real time and space, but something that has some real importance to it. Political fantasy is what I'll call it.

Your films reach a relatively small audience, yet as a political filmmaker, you, I would imagine, want to reach as large an audience as possible. I mean it's an old and kind of naive question, but how



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images MAY 2-11
FESTIVAL OF INDEPENDENT FILM AND VIDEO
1998

New Canadian Private Parts and Public Personas in the Greasy Media:

a review of three programmes in the Images Festival.

by Jeff Sterne



Jane Farrow savors her new found lesbian accessories, driven to shop by the power of kd's gentle persuasion. (Kelly O'Brien and Jane Farrow, Nice)

V-Tape sponsored the first Friday night of the Festival, assembling six new works that explore sexuality and the human body under the title *Private Parts & Public Personas*. The productions dealt mainly with the female body as sexual, maternal, and as exceptional.

For instance, *Sex Bowl* by E.T. Baby Maniac, Shu Lea Cheang and Jane Castle was a playful look into the game of sexuality. *Perversion* carried a kinky tune with edited black and white video from a local bowling alley. Everyone's going for the strike! The hipness of it all was what Kelly O'Brien and Jane Farrow looked at with their video *Nice*. A good first-person narrative led the audience through popular media's recent fixation with chic lesbianism. Our character, played by Farrow just couldn't fit into the media's range of sexual personas. A truly priceless moment has Farrow shopping, humming along to K.D. Lang. The short video *Not Tough Enough* said to hell with it — Ariella Pahlke and Brenda Barns created an East Coast, lesbian singalong that reminded me of Canned Heat's song *Moving to the Country*.

Sick World III: The Baby allowed the audience to pause and ponder at how we define the roles of Mom and Pop. In this personal documentary, Deborah Vanslet arranged a structured frame where she spoke directly to the audience, relating a tale that spoke of the endurance of being the non-birthing partner of someone who's giving birth. Her engaging, anecdotal, heart to heart commentary to the camera was highly effective.

The animated short that followed won the Telefilm Canada award. Gail Noonan's *Your Name in Cellulite* is a playful film that pokes fun at the painful struggles involved in women's beauty rituals. The animation was pretty slick and the piece has a great ending.

images MAY 2-11
FESTIVAL OF INDEPENDENT FILM AND VIDEO
1996



Spring Fever: New Works from Canadian Film and Video Artists

Sarah Lightbody and Karen Tisch curated the Festivals first night, starting with *Shooting Blanks*, a co-production between Mike Hoolbloom and Shawn Chappelle. It was interesting watching Hoolbloom's minimalist frame and narrative monologue that playfully addressed the audience and portrayed the precarious struggle of Canadian cinema. Chappelle breaks the pace with a montage of distorted images of America, images so severe that I needed to catch my breath before the next film.

The poetic black and white images of Alina Martiro's *Pearl Mad* smoothed everything out. With the use of a warm narrative, *Pearl Mad* flowed from the struggles of a woman who worked in an insemination lab to an analysis of the sexual hierarchy of past generations.

The programme became more formal with Sara Diamond's *Fit to be Tied*. This well-structured documentary outlined the social and political history of women during the Great Depression. Like many progressive documentaries, Diamond used minimum talking head shots, opting instead for images that breathed life into her commentary.

There were three films in this programme that leapt away from the rigours of the realist world. *Non-Zymase Pentathlon* was one of them. Chris Gehman and Roberh Ariganello created a dancing visual circus of what could only be called "pop" images. Cut outs and collages that were animated to freak you out (it was pretty cool). The whole thing played perfectly into the following production *Nuvo Homo*. The audience chuckled at Lorri Millan and Stephen Lawson's collection of short videos that introduced the gay community to the Midwest.

The visions of John Kneller's *We are Experiencing Technical Difficulties...* were



Florence Dore, Julie Kemp, Niki Cousino & Sarah Lewison in *Fat of the Land*

beautiful. Colour and imagery, optically printed with organic forms created a moving landscape that carried beautifully in silence. This formal moment was continued in the next video. Steve Reinke's *Talk Show* used digital morphing technology on a series of shots of feet, interchanging all of our forms into one visual world.

In the next production Kathleen Maitland-Carter and Su Rynard flipped the perspective, turning away from the whole and analyzing the individual. *Sexual Healing* used a conventional documentary style to explore six women who had discovered themselves through various sorts of sexual transformation. (I turned away during the nipple piercing...)

The programme ended appropriately with Yasmin Karim's film *Sijjil*, an animated spectacle, strongly imagistic, with rounded flowing colours dancing to the music of Dr. Allamah Nasir Hunzal.

The last programmes of the Festival took place in the soon-to-be-condos Metropolitan Theatre. There was great irony in watching Heather Frise's and Velcrow Ripper's *Bones of the Forest* there, a documentary about the destruction of something we view as majestically beautiful. The theatre was packed and judging by the applause, the audience was truly moved by the imaginative force of the

presentation.

The last night featured three video screenings, beginning with Jody Lafond's 3 *PSA's on Welfare*. The three short pieces were designed to debunk the myths about people who rely on social assistance. The announcements were effective and straightforward. After the show Lafond explained that the spots never ended up making it to air because of the political swing to the right in New York state. She doesn't like Newt Gingrich... The same provocative tone was present in the documentary *Despite TV Decoded*. This London, U.K. production presented a much more aggressive approach to objecting to neo-conservative ideology. Using dark, high energy footage from several high energy protests, Great Britain's *Despite TV* had assembled an angry visual slogan against the new world order.

The last screening of the evening was more cheerful, but just as politically minded. *Fat of the Land* is a how-to road movie by a group of women environmentalists, who instruct the audience in their method of using vegetable oil to power a diesel van across the country. This entertaining film combines the struggles of shooting a road movie with technical jargon about rendering fat on the road to use as the next days fuel. If only our science teachers could be been this much fun.

announcements: THE ARTS

SCREENWRITING CLINIC

We are offering a one on one screenwriting clinic to LIFT members. The instructor will help participants visualize their words on celluloid. Depend on the nature of the participants script, the focus of the project will be on:

- Structure
- Character Development
- Dialogue
- The art of storytelling with a visual medium
- Working within the confines of a low budget

Any length and genre will be accepted from one minute to feature, from experimental, documentary, dramatic to hybrid. Scripts may be submitted at any stage of development.

Participants will come away with a better understanding of their story and with the inspiration to move to the next stage of realizing their film.

The fee for this workshop will be \$20 per hour. This hourly rate will include the time it takes to read the script. The rate will also vary according to the length of the project.

For more information call Greg or Lisa at LIFT

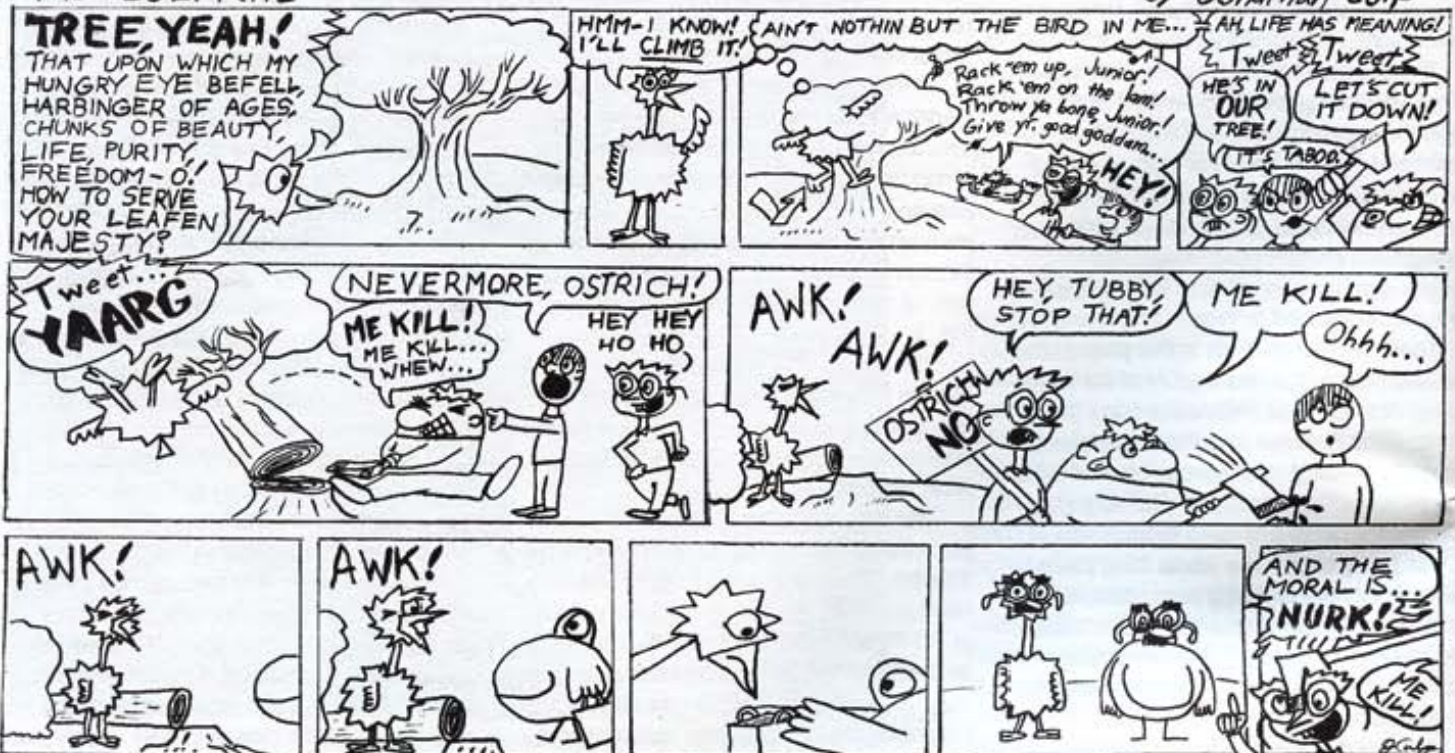
About the Instructor:

Annette Mangaard is an independent filmmaker who has written, directed and produced 11 films ranging in length from 5 to 90 minutes. She has worked in the genres of experimental documentary, and fiction. Mangaard's films have been shown around the world including a solo screening at the kino arsenal, in Berlin, a film performance in Sao Paolo, Brazil. Five of her film have been shown at the Toronto International Festival. Mangaard was also a writer/director resident at the Canadian film centre. She has just completed Fish Tale Soup a feature film starring Remy Girard.

Have you seen the brochure the Spring/Summer 1996 Shoptalks? There is still space available in some classes. Call today to confirm availability or to request a brochure. Some space still available in:
 Music Video Production, June 15 & 16 with Scott Eldridge
 Workshop for Writer/Directors, June 22 & 23, with Midi Onodera
 Grant Writing, July 10 with Paulette Phillips
 Basic Optical Printing, August 3,4,10 & 11, with Greg Woodbury
 Super-8 Filmmaking: The Alternative Medium, July 4&6, with John Kneller
 Intro to Lighting Techniques, July 20 & 27, with John Lesavage
 Call: 588-6444 for more details.

THE CULPRITS

by Jonathan Culp



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

LIFT MEMBERSHIP CO-ORDINATOR

Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto

LIFT's current membership stands at over 600 members who rely on the co-op for production equipment, information resources and various services and activities. The Membership Co-ordinator's primary responsibilities will include dealing with inquiries regarding membership, updating membership records, maintaining information resources for members, and ensuring that all members are able to take full advantage of the resources, services, and activities available to them through the co-op.

DUTIES:

Membership Intake/Volunteer Co-ordination: provide new and prospective members with information about LIFT, its services, activities and resources through regularly scheduled orientation sessions, and along with other staff, supervise volunteers

Membership Education: provide written information to the membership on all Policies and Procedures regarding membership, and update this information as needed; posting information of interest to members to the Newsletter Editor for publication; co-ordinate bi-monthly mailings to the membership, and other special mailings when required; assist members with information needs

Membership Outreach: work with other LIFT Staff to implement outreach initiatives, and raise awareness of LIFT's services among under-served communities/targeted groups, and to increase and improve access to these services wherever necessary

Data Collection: maintain computer databases on membership, volunteers, crew lists, festivals, media, organizations, etc., and provide this information to staff, board and committees as required; maintain other lists for applications to funders, including members' films in progress, recently completed film festivals and screenings, awards and nominations, broadcast sales, LIFT monthly screening, LIFT sponsored exhibitions, oversee the annual publication of the LIFT Members' Directory

Staff/Committees: report all activities at weekly staff meetings; provide relevant support information to other staff for grant applications, sponsorship proposals, and other initiatives; act as staff liaison to the Programming and Newsletter Committees (which organizes the monthly screenings and publishes a bi-monthly newsletter, respectively)

Administration and Corporate: prepare monthly written reports for the Board of Directors; act as staff rep (on a rotating basis) at monthly board meetings; participate in general office duties shared among staff

OUR IDEAL CANDIDATE:

- has demonstrated strong interpersonal skills
- has excellent written and oral communication skills
- is Mac literate (Filemaker, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Works, Pagemaker, Quark)
- is organized and a self-starter, able to juggle several tasks at once
- can concentrate, work and meet deadlines in a hectic environment
- is familiar or has experience with media arts/artist run centres
- has knowledge of LIFT and independent filmmaking community

Hours: 4 days/week, 7 hrs/day (Mon. - Thurs., 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.)

Salary: dependent upon experience

Start Date: August 19, 1996

This is a permanent position.

LIFT strongly encourages applications from First Nations people and people of colour.

Deadline for applications: 4 p.m. Friday, July 12, 1996

Interviews will be held the week of July 29, 1996

Send resumes and cover letters to:

LIFT Hiring Committee, 37 Hanna Ave., #301, Toronto, ON M6K 1W8

We will only be contacting those people who will be interviewed.



The Toronto Worldwide Short Film Festival has just wrapped up... four fun filled days of bitchin' short film screenings, each culminating in a party. Day one gala screening ended with an opening night bash at what used to be Three Small Rooms restaurant in the Windsor Arms. It is now an empty concrete chamber, which was decorated for the occasion with hanging sheets of muslin and inexplicably straw and bits of twig. The barn look? Very Martha Stewart. Just like a barn, there were no bathrooms on site, and the kindly sympathetic staff recommended Toby's around the corner... I heard that the best party was at Fune, in honour of the Japanese programme presented at the Festival. All the sushi and saki you could imbibe free of charge. Not like the party at 217 Richmond St. West - cash bar only.

I attended some of the workshops at the Park Plaza hotel. Most were geared at beginners: the writing workshop featured the usual delineation of story structure - find your plot points, make a 'beat sheet' - contradicted by those who favour the 'just write it, then structure it' approach. The questions from the audience were disappointing - "What time of day do you write? Do you think formatting is important?" Best on the panel was LIFT's own Stephanie Morgenstern, recent winner of the script prize at the Yorkton film festival. Stephanie's remarks made most sense to indies; reminding everyone that she could only speak from her own very limited (albeit highly successful) experience, she said that she had taken the money saved to buy a house, blown it all and then some, "I'm broke, she said, "...but boy am I empowered."



review by Barb Mainguy



Grant Campell's Dirty Creature

Among the pieces of advice she gave was one that seemed essential to those stalled in getting going on their first film - ask yourself whose permission you are waiting for?

The funding workshop fared no better, with questions like "Try to get corporate sponsorship," and Remember the grant system..." Again, complete beginners may have found more worth mining from these sessions.

There's less of the extreme or edgy kind of filmmaking you see at Images or Inside Out's Festival, and the choices seemed streamed in a more commercial direction, resulting sometimes in more style than substance, and the

absence of some local hits, but on the whole the selection was interesting, and some films rocked. Overall, the work presented showed what can happen when short filmmaking is legitimized and supported by the industry; by which I mean filmmakers get money (and one could get cynical looking at the glossy Euroshorts compared with the - er- fierstier look of most indies here at home). My personal favourite was the meditative *The Whispers of the Wind* by Franco de Pena - an old man tries to coax his burro up the rocky slopes of the Venezuelan mountains - but maybe that's just me. The festival gave best of fest to *Nowhere Man*, a rather I thought uninterestingly made notion film of a man who disap-



pears at his desk. The truly terrifying *The Fridge* appropriately won best international short, and the well made but strangely undramatic story (it was meant to be a terrifying story but by focusing as it did on the father not the child or the mother it lost some of its punch) *Curiosities* won best Canadian short. The Best Documentary winner was Jacek Blawut's excellent *I Had A Friend*, about a man invalidated out of the French Foreign Legion who was adjusting to life in the non military world. Inexplicably, Best Animated Short was a clunky computer-rendered piece of juvenelia about a dog eating his own shit - an ridiculous choice given the many compelling animation works there. (David Stewart's *Cabbage*, Chris Landreth's *The End*, the Nick Park shorts, and I'm sure everyone has their own list).

To my mind the more unusually formal films, like Roswitha Menzel's *The Last Cowboy* or the truly original stories (like *Dirty Little Creatures* by New Zealand director - and I'm sure everyone has their own list) were unfortunately unrewarded in the final analysis.

The festival was well organized with lots of available information, repeat screenings and screenings that started on time, and good prints. The awards ceremony though was a fiasco - Fest Director Brenda Sherwood, perhaps having had a late night, forgot the names of sponsors, neglected to call invited presenters up to the podium, forgot to mention names of the winners, and when unable to pronounce Jacek Blawut's name, giggled uncontrollably.

Finally, one must ask why the Canadian industry doesn't support shorts the way Europe does, as a legitimate, distributable art form. Aside from the CFMDC, there is in Canada an absence of vision in this regard.



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LIFT needs a portable CD player for previewing sound effects. Donations can receive a tax deductible receipt. If you have one that you'd like to donate or sell, call Lisa or Greg at 588-6444.

PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE>>>

In order to make submission of completed films to the Programming Committee simpler, we have set up a drop box, located at the LIFT office. Please leave us your prints, video dubs, or just descriptive materials on your finished (or nearly finished) films, so that we can show them at future LIFT screenings. (Be sure to include contact information with all submissions).

WE WANT TO SEE EVERYBODY'S WORK WHILE IT'S STILL WET FROM THE LAB!

ATTENTION OPTICAL PRINTERS:

KODAK 7272 print stock available at LIFT. Any length available for \$165/400 feet, plus a \$5 roll down fee per roll. Non-members can purchase 7272 for \$175/400 feet plus \$5 roll down fee. Call ahead for orders, and allow time for your order to be rolled down. Contact Greg or Lisa at 588-6444.

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monday june 24 8:00pm • C.F.M.D.C - 37 Hanna Avenue #200 • Free to LIFT members, all others by donation

LIFT monthly screening

A Personal Statistic John Lesavage
5:30 colour 16mm 1994

Angst Gerald Saul
30:00 colour 16mm 1990

City of Dreams Jorge Manzano
28:00 colour 16mm 1985

Killing Time Paula Tiberius
15:00 B&W 16mm 1996



City of Dreams



Killing Time