



THE LIAISON OF INDEPENDENT
FILMMAKERS OF TORONTO

SEPT/OCT. 1999 VOL. 19 NO. 5



INSIDE:

INTERVIEW WITH MIGUEL ROCHA
COMPOSITING THE SOUL
OF PHILLIP BARKER
THE NAKED FILMMAKER
QUICKTIME
TIFF



**THE LIAISON OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS
OF TORONTO**
Sept/Oct, 1999
Volume 19, No.5

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Editorial Larissa Fan

I've been hanging out at TIFF, and the buzz at the festival was around digital film — or what is now sometimes being dubbed "digital cinema" (to avoid the confusion with actual film stock, I suppose). The Rogers Symposium had several sessions on the topic, and the Dogme filmmakers came up again and again. As digital technologies develop, the lines between media are becoming increasingly blurred. The term "digital filmmaking" itself has slipped into usage with nary a ripple — the hyped digital "films," such as Thomas Vinterberg's *Celebration*, while shot on DV are still transferred to film for the final product. What happens as digital projection technology develops — is the demise of celluloid film looming inevitably on the horizon?

As someone who loves her hand-cranked 1950's Bolex, and finds solace in splicing tape and dusty trim bins, I'd like to bury my head in the sand on the whole digital issue. But like it or hate it, digital is not about to go away. LIFT members have already discovered the benefits of editing digitally, just look at the full booking sheets for the Media 100. At some point we're going to have to think about what it all means for a film co-op such as LIFT.

In the meantime, the LIFT Newsletter jumps into the digital fray with an interesting and entertaining article about digital filmmaking by **Michelle Micuda**, and a guide to making your own digital film clips using Quicktime by **David Blomme**. There's also TIFF coverage, an interview with **Miguel Rocha** about his recently completed feature, and more! Enjoy.

Board Report Jeff Sterne

Sept. 8: It was obvious the summer was over - the board's attendance hadn't been this large since the spring. It was our Membership Coordinator's turn to attend a meeting and Deanna was overjoyed to present a loose breakdown of her duties and outline how things are going in her department. Our Executive Director, Deborah, took over and ended up leading an enlightening conversation surrounding the Technical Coordinator's report. In preparation for an upgrade in our digital editing department, L.I.F.T is purchasing more memory space and adapting a new procedure to keep the space we have clear and productive. Remember, if you're going to take up space on the Media 100, you'll be charged even if you're not editing. Deborah explained the policy by pointing out that members are charged for locker space even though they might not be there; our locker rental spaces work this way, so why not our digital memory space? After the technical stuff Deborah looked into her budgeting crystal ball and made a forecast on how next year will look. Things are going OK, and if anyone wants to know more, show up to the Annual General Meeting on November 22nd. Hope to see you all there.



THE CANADA COUNCIL
FOR THE ARTS
SINCE 1957

LE CONSEIL DES ARTS
DU CANADA
DEPUIS 1957

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, the City of Toronto through the Toronto Arts Council.

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 address is:

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

e-mail: lift@inforamp.net

Anyone with suggestions or ideas, please call Deanna at the LIFT office, or e-mail: fanburke@interlog.com

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upcoming festival deadlines:

FESTIVAL /LOCATION /DATE: DEADLINE: TELEPHONE:

E-MAIL & WEBSITE:

ENCONTROS INTERNACIONAIS DE CINEMA DOCUMENTAL

Olival Basto, Portugal 11/13-21/99 10/25/99 351 1 938 84 07/938 85 70 amascultura@mail.telepac.pt

CINEQUEST 2000

San Jose, Ca, USA 02/24-03/05/00 10/29/99 408 995 5033 cineqst@wenet.net www.cinequest.org

CLERMONT-FERRAND SHORT FILM FESTIVAL

Clermont-Ferrand, France 02/7-11/2000 10/29/99 33-473 91 65 73 info@clermont-filmfest.com http://shortfilm.gdebussac.fr

TRANSMEDIALE 99

Berlin, Germany 02/11-20/99 10/29/99 49 30 2472 1907 info@transmediale.de www.transmediale.de

VICTORIA INDEPENDENT SHORT FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL

Victoria, B.C. 02/4-10/99 10/29/99 250 389 0444 cinevic@coastnet.com www.coastnet.com/~cinevic/

FESTIVAL INTERNACIONAL DE CINE DEPORTIVO

Santander, Spain 11/28-12/4/99 10/30/99 34 942 22 70 31 santander@sportfilm-festsant.com
www.sportfilm-festsant.com

NUREMBERG INTERFILM FESTIVAL - SHORT AND DOCUMENTARY FILMFESTIVAL

Nuremberg, Germany 03/9-19/2000 10/30/99 +49 911 9296560 filmfestival@interforum.net www.interforum.net

CINEMA DU REEL - 22ND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND SOCIAL DOCUMENTATION

Paris, France 03/10-19/00 11/1/99 1 44 78 44 21 cinereel@bpi.fr www.bpi.fr

GOTEBORG FILM FESTIVAL

Goteborg, Sweden 01/28-02/06/00 11/1/99 46 31 41 05 46 goteborg@filmfestival.org www.goteborg.filmfestival.org

31ST INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF INDIA

New Delhi, India 01/10-20/99 11/15/99 +91 11 465 5953/4969 4920/469 7167

FILMS DE FEMMES DE CRETEIL ET DU VAL DE MARNE

Creteil, France 03/24-04/2/00 11/15/99 33 1 49 80 38 98 filmsfemmes@wannadoo.fr www.gdebussac.fr/film-fem

RECONTRES INTERNATIONALES HENRI LANGLOIS (INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL FILM FESTIVAL)

Poitiers, France 03/13-19/00 11/15/99 33 0 5 49 41 80 00 festival-poitiers@rihl.org www.rihl.org

(FIPA) INTERNATIONAL AUDIOVISUAL PROGRAMMES FESTIVAL

Biarritz, France 01/18-23/00 11/19/99 33 (0)1 44 89 99 99 fipa@wanadoo.fr person.wanadoo.fr/fipa/

MEDIA CITY

Windsor, On 02/9-12/00 11/26/99 (519) 977-6564 artcite@netcore.ca/www.netcore.ca/~hot

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL/GOLDEN GATE AWARDS

San Francisco, Ca, USA 04/20-05/4/99 12/2/99 (415) 929-5014 stiff@stiff.org www.stiff.org

HIROSHIMA 2000 - THE 8TH INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FESTIVAL IN JAPAN

Hiroshima, Japan 08/24-28/00 3/21/2000 81 82 245 0245 hiroanim@urban.ne.jp

FEMINALE - INTERNATIONALES FRAUENFILM FESTIVAL KOLN

Koln, Germany 10/10/2000 6/1/2000 +49 221 1300225 feminine@t-online.de
www.dom.de/filmworks/feminale

Guidelines and application forms for this list of 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.

The 1996 edition of the AIVF Guide to International Film & Video Festivals is an invaluable resource for planning your festival entries for the upcoming year. It's available at the office as an in-house resource for all LIFT members.

Calls for Submissions:

DESH PARDESH is a non-profit, community-based organization that brings together diasporic South Asian communities (with a particular focus on those based in the West) that build progressive communities through arts and activism. Our organization is member driven and responsive to changing times and new issues.

They need your involvement for:

1. Programming Committee
2. Organizational Development Committee
3. Ongoing Programming Committee
4. General Volunteer

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION contact Desh @ 401 Richmond St. W Suite 450
Toronto, ON Canada M5V 3A8, tel:416.340.0485, fax:416.340.1418, <http://home.ican.net/~desh>

SALT CITY PRODUCTIONS/BIG CITY TV - A TV/home video production company is seeking original short films (preferably 10 minutes or less) for broadcast on a new cable comedy series and inclusion in an upcoming video anthology collection. For more info. E-mail SCVP@aol.com DEADLINE: On-going

THE NATIONAL SCREEN INSTITUTE OF CANADA'S upcoming calls: **FEATURES FIRST PROGRAM** call for entries - Deadline October 26, **DRAMA PRIZE** - Deadline November 19, **LOCAL HEROES FESTIVAL** - Deadline November 26. For more info.: 800 480 4084 or <www.nsi-canada.ca>

A BLUEPRINT FOR MOVING IMAGES IN THE 21ST CENTURY is a call to imaginative, incisive soothsayers, a challenge to media artists across the country to produce a future blueprint for moving images for the new century. Pleasure Dome is seeking proposals by Canadian artists for the creation and production of short experimental films & videos (under 10 min.) that theorize on what moving images might look like in the 21st Century! Selected proposals will be funded up to a maximum of \$5000 towards the production and completion of a film/video work under 10 minutes. The completed works will be given an exclusive premiere with Pleasure Dome during our Fall season 2000 and begin a national tour in January 2001. Please send written (maximum 750 words) and/or visual treatment of proposed film/video work with a realistic production budget and CV (with slides or preview tape of previous work) by November 1, 1999. Please enclose self-addressed stamped envelope. Proposals by non-media artists, emerging film and videomakers and artists from diverse cultural and regional communities of Canada are encouraged. Pleasure Dome: 6 Alcina Avenue, Toronto, On., M6G 2E8, ph.: 416 656 5577 <pdome@ican.net>, <http://home.ican.net/~pdome>

Timetable for BLUEPRINT :

Nov. 1, 1999 - Deadline for submissions
Dec. 1, 1999 - Announcement of selected proposals
Dec. 1, 1999 to Aug. 1, 2000 - Production of film/ video works
Fall 2000 - Toronto Premiere of Blueprint
Jan. to May 2001 - National Tour of Program Pleasure Dome is a Toronto-based artist-run curatorial and exhibition group devoted to the presentation of cutting-edge experimental film and video

OAC RELAXES DEADLINE PRESSURE - OAC has adjusted its strict deadline policy to ensure that artists across the province are not penalized by inclement weather, postal delays or other unforeseen circumstances. Effective immediately, all applications postmarked (either by Canada Post or courier company date stamps) on the deadline date will be accepted. On deadline day, applicants will be able to leave their packages with building security at 151 Bloor Street West until the building closes at 10:30 p.m.

THE NATIVE INDIAN/INUIT PHOTOGRAPHERS ASSOCIATION is currently accepting exhibition proposals for 2000. N.I.I.P.A. accepts proposals for solo exhibitions, group shows or curatorial projects. Native photo-based artists, groups or independent curators are encouraged to

submit the following information for consideration:

- 1) cover letter
- 2) artist statement for exhibition
- 3) current artist's c.v (biographical resume)
- 4) maximum 20 slides of proposed show
- 5) numbered list of slides/information
- 6) s.a.s.e (self addressed stamped envelope) for return of proposal

Deadline for exhibition proposals for 2000 is November 15, 1999.

THE 8TH PAN AFRICAN FILM FESTIVAL: The Largest Black Film Festival in the United States is accepting submissions for its 2000 festival which will take place February 10-21, at the Magic Johnson Theatres in Los Angeles. With a yearly audience of over 20,000 people, PAFF provides a showcase for over 75 films and videos made by or about people of African descent. Films originate from the United States, Canada, Africa, South America, the South Pacific, Europe, Australia, and the Caribbean. PAFF accepts features, shorts and documentaries of all genres. Film competition for Best Feature, Best Documentary, Best Short, Jury Award and Audience Favorite. PAFF also invites Studio and Television Sneak Previews and Premieres. Also special screenings for Children and Students. For more info call 323.295.1706 or visit their website @ <<http://www.paff.org>> DEADLINE: Oct. 31st

Announcements:

VOLUNTEER HOURS FOR SCREENING FILMS - A reminder that LIFT Members receive 5 volunteer hrs. for screening their works in the MONTHLY SCREENING. For more info. or submissions call Deanna at 588-6444.

Join the **NEWSLETTER** Committee: if you are interested in the direction of LIFT's Newsletter. Members receive 20 vol. hrs for committee service. Call Deanna at the office to RSVP. Upcoming meeting (6:15pm @ LIFT): Tues. November 2.

LOOKING FOR VIDEO TAPES FOR A NEW LIFT LIBRARY OF MEMBERS' FILMS - The goal for the new library is to: 1. create a resource for the Programming Committee to view new and past works of LIFT members; 2. to establish another means of presenting LIFT members films to the membership. Members of the co-op would be able to view VHS dubbed films. Your works will not leave the premises. If you are interested in donating a copy of your work call Deanna @ 588-6444. LIFT will not

lend/screen members films to non-members, nor does it intend to attempt any means of distribution.

LIFT'S PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE is looking for new members! Looking for a way to make up your volunteer hours? Committee members receive 20 vol. hours for committee service. Next meetings are October 19, & November 16 (6:15pm @ LIFT). Call Deanna to RSVP.

THE IMAGES FESTIVAL of Independent Film and Video is pleased to announce its new staff members for Images 2000. Images welcomes: Kelly Langgard of the Herland Festival in Calgary as its new Executive Director; filmmaker, writer and programmer Mike Hoolboom to the new position of Artistic Director; and Larissa Fan (filmmaker and LIFT's own Newsletter editor) as Festival Coordinator.

LIFT'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, Deborah McInnis, can now be reached directly by email at exedir@istar.ca

new members:

Welcome new members
as of May 99:

Michael A. Appleton
Temple Bates
Jessica Beirne
Stephanie Brown
Jonathan Culp
Victor Fan
Stephanie Feikes
Richard Fox
Aubrey Franklin
Colin Frizzell
Andy Gidwani
Ricardo Giorgi
Jason Gracey
Laurence Green
Jeremy Greer
Atsuko Gyoumouchi
Sheila Hans
Jonathan Hayes
Shuntaro Honzawa
Alison Humphrey
Roxanne Joseph
Bernice Karn
Nicolas Kassatly
Ian Kennedy
Janice Kun
Shelly Lindsay
Steven Lungley
Andria Lynett
Richard Mandin
Michael Marcada
David Marcoux
Matthew Pollack
Keith Potter
Siobhan Power
Fraser Robinson
Tamara Romanchuk
Jasmin Sandhu
Karyn Sandlos
Sherry Shute
Clare Smyth
Danielle Susskind
Noah Taylor
Mario Tenorio
Joe Tetreau
Karen A. Thompson
Thé Tien
Mark Vogelsang
Rocco Zingarelli

funding & grant deadlines:

CANADA COUNCIL

1 800 263 5588 X5060

Travel Grants

Anytime

Quest Program

March 1, 2000

Grants to Film Artists

November 1, 1999

Grants to Video Artists

November 1, 1999

GRANTS TO NEW MEDIA ARTISTS

November 1, 1999

ABORIGINAL MEDIA ARTS PROGRAM

April 1, 2000

BELL BROADCAST AND NEW MEDIA FUND

977-8154

February 1, 1999 and May 1, 2000

CANADA TELEVISION AND CABLE PRODUCTION FUND EQUITY INVESTMENT PROGRAM

(514) 283-6363

on an ongoing basis, please call their office to confirm

ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL

961-1660

First Projects: Film & Video

January 25, 2000

Aboriginal Filmmaker Assistance Program

973-3012

on an ongoing basis, please call their office to confirm

CANADIAN INT'L DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Communications Branch

(819) 997 1663

on an ongoing basis, please call their office to confirm

THE HAROLD GREENBERG FUND

956-5431

on an ongoing basis, please call their office to confirm

BANFF CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

Television, New Media And Deep Web Co-Productions

(403) 762-6696

Financial assistance for up to 60 per cent of budget. Intended for mid-career or senior professionals.

on an ongoing basis, please call their office to confirm.

COGECO PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND

977 8966

October 15, 1999, February 1, 2000, April 1, 2000, July 15, 2000

LIFT Orientation:

LIFT's orientation session will be on Wednesday, Nov 17, 11:30 am to 1 pm for members who haven't yet familiarized themselves with the co-op. Call Kristine at 588-6444 for more info.



**THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE STILL
AVAILABLE FOR SILENT AUCTION
BIDDING!**

Contact the LIFT office if you are interested
ASAP.

Item #2: The Post Group.

10 days of Offline editing on a Lightworks
system.

Value: \$2,500.00

Minimum bid: \$833.00

Item #4: deluxe Toronto.

4 hours of TV mixing time mono/stereo. Mix
does not include tape stock or transfer time.

Expiry date - August 31, 2000.

Value: \$1,600.00

Minimum bid: \$533.00

Item #5: deluxe Toronto.

4 hours of TV mixing time mono/stereo. Mix
does not include tape stock or transfer time.

Expiry date - August 31, 2000.

Value: \$1,600.00

Minimum bid: \$533.00

Item #8: The 16mm Shop.

Rent \$1,500.00 at the 16mm Shop and
receive an \$800.00 credit. Expiry date -
December 31, 1999.

Value: \$800.00

Minimum bid: \$266.00

Item #12: Wallace Avenue Studios. Credit
towards studio rental. Expiry date -
September 2000.

Value: \$500.00

Minimum bid: \$166.00

Item #13: Synchronicity Digital Audio.

Credit towards audio services.

Value: \$500.00

Minimum bid: \$166.00

Item #21: Insomniac Press.

8 Great books by local authors.

Value: \$160.00

Minimum bid: \$53.00

Item #15: eye Weekly.

Classified ad voucher. Need actors? A new
room-mate? A location or a new love inter-
est? \$300.00 worth of classified ad space in
eye Weekly.

Value: \$300.00

Minimum bid: \$100.00

Web Column

By Brian Gahan and Susana Molinolo

Yes, the millennium draws closer and closer, and the days
get colder and colder. So why not stay indoors, travel the
world through the net, and find a holiday or festivity worth
filming? These sites can help you make makin' movies your
year 2000 resolution.

The World Wide Holiday and Festival Page

<http://www.HolidayFestival.com>

This site contains links to over 300 links to over 200 coun-
tries, each listing national holidays, festivals, and feasts.

Merry Christmas

<http://www.algonet.se/~bernadot/christmas/calendar.html>

This site is a project hosted by children and teachers at
Bernadotteskolen: The International School in Denmark.
Within these links are recipes, songs (some with audio files),
and children's drawings, pictures, and descriptions of holiday
traditions and legends from around the world.

Chinese New Year

<http://www.chinascape.org>

Besides links to essays on the history and celebration of the
Chinese New Year, you will find links to Chinese calendars,
songs, astrology, and information on specific celebrations
planned around the world.

Festival Finder: Music Festivals of North America

<http://www.festivalfinder.com>

Links to individual festivals yield dates, artists scheduled to
appear, location, directions, and detailed descriptions of the
history and happenings of each festival.

The Sikhism Home Page

<http://www.sikhs.org>

This page is a storehouse of information on Sikh religion,
including its many sections: Philosophy, The Sikh Gurus,
Ceremonies, Festivals and Dates in Sikh History.

Year 2000 and Millennium Threshold Observances around the World

<http://www.igc.org/millennium/events/index.html>

Toward its goal of helping to "create the conditions for the
peoples of the world to achieve a sustainable future for Earth
and to use the energy of the year 2000 to begin building a
diverse alliance committed to this task", this page is dedicat-
ed to events for the coming millennium.

LIFT Equipment News:

KODAK DISCONTINUES 7272 & 7378 INTERNEG!

KODAK, IN ITS INFINITE WISDOM AND WITHOUT WARNING, HAS DECIDED TO STOP MAKING 7272 COLOUR AND 7378 B&W INTERNEGATIVE PRINTER STOCKS.

7272 stock is a low contrast, high resolution film ideal for colour optical printing. LIFT has been buying the stock in the 4000' minimum batches and selling it not only to LIFT members but also to filmmakers and film schools and Co-Ops throughout the country. They have replaced it with a new ester based stock, 3272. Unfortunately, this stock is useless because as a ester or mylar based film, it cannot be cement spliced and therefore a neg cutter cannot generate A/B rolls. To further complicate matters, the mylar/ester stock is virtually unbreakable and is not recommended to be used in cameras (or optical printers). If the film jams in the camera it will destroy the internal mechanisms before the film would break. Like 7272, 7378 is an extremely popular, inexpensive, hi-con internegative popular with filmmakers who like to hand process the film themselves.

As a result of Kodak's decision, LIFT members are left without an adequate colour or b&w internegatives to use with our optical printers and many of their projects are in limbo. LIFT wants to encourage Kodak to reinstate 7272 & 7378 film stocks and we need your help organizing an effective petition. Please call Roberto at 588-6444 ASAP if you want to get involved.

If you want to support independent filmmakers and express your displeasure with Kodak call Joanna Gravelle at 766-8233 ext. 34617.

MEDIA 100:

Starting October 1, 1999, LIFT will be charging an extra fee for hard drive space. Full members will be charged \$1/day per GB for hard drive space in excess of 2 GB and associate members will be charged \$2/day per GB in excess of 2 GB. The charge will apply to all days that the media stays on the hard drive, whether you are editing that day or not.

Media can remain on the hard drive for up to 7 days without a booking. After that period, the media will be erased if the drive space is required, unless the member has contacted the Technical Co-ordinators in ADVANCE. If we do not hear from you and the drive space is required, your media may be removed.

WANTED: Members with carpentry skills and tools to help out with some projects for volunteer hours. Contact Roberto at 588-6444

NEW STUFF AT LIFT

LIFT has recently purchased a new 12 ft. 3 inch Polecat that comes with an arm that attaches perpendicular to the pole.

LIFT now has an Olympus 35mm still photography camera ideal for anyone who wants to shoot publicity stills for their film. The camera comes with a 50 mm 1.8 lens and has automatic exposure and manual override.

We have recently received a non-reflex Bolex camera and 10mm Switar lens that will be dedicated to the underwater housing. This is ideal for anyone considering an underwater shoot or one that involves rain, splashing and/or any kind of fluids.

DAILY BLOCKBOOKING RATES FOR FLATBED EDITING

Just a reminder LIFT has created a daily block-

booking rate for the Steenbeck and Intercine suites. Full members can have exclusive access to a suite any day of the week for \$15/day and associates for \$30/day. This is ideal for weekend filmmakers!

Like all LIFT equipment, a weekend (including long weekends) is charged as one day and a 7 day week is billed as 4 days.

Workshop Committee Meeting

The next meeting is Wednesday, October 6, at 6:00 p.m. at the LIFT office. We need input from the membership for our new and exciting Hand-Made Film Course scheduled to begin in January 2000. Committee members receive 20 volunteer hours for participating in this fascinating endeavor. Call Roberto at 588-6444 if you have any interesting ideas for any kind of workshop.

FALL 99 WORKSHOPS

There are still some spaces available in the Fall 99 Workshop Series!

The Sweet Smell of Success: Marketing & Publicizing your Film on Tuesday November 16 & Thursday November 18, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Spaces are going fast so register soon!

Effective January 1, 2000, LIFT will no longer accept cheques for Production Equipment Rentals. Members can pay with cash or interac to receive the 10% pre-paid discount, or with VISA but no discount applies.

Thanks to **Jesse Rosensweet** who has donated 4 Mole Richardson Lights to LIFT: 1-1000W, 2-2000W and 1-5000W. They do require a little rewiring, but we hope to have them available for rental soon.

Members' Activities:

THE ANIMATION & OPTICAL PRINTING CLUB

Are you thinking about making a film with the optical printers or the animation camera and are looking for help? Do you want to volunteer on an animation shoot or optical printing session to gain some experience? If you have answered yes to any of the above questions then give Roberto a call at 588-6444 and join the club. The mandate is this club is simple: to encourage use of LIFT's optical printers and animation camera and bring members together to support each others projects.

SCRIPT READING

The Scriptwriting Workshop held during the Spring 99 Workshop Series will be holding a public reading of a short film scripts that were conceived during the Scott Albert's intensive 6 week workshop. Actors will read from the scripts followed by a Q & A with the script writers. The readings will take place October 29 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. in the mezzanine at LIFT. All are welcome and refreshments will be served.

EQUIPMENT RESOURCE MEETING

The first Thursday of every other month, LIFT hosts a meeting at which members will have the opportunity to express their views regarding the future of the equipment and facilities at LIFT. Anyone with particular interests or concerns but are unable to attend the meeting, are encouraged to put their suggestions in writing, and send them to Roberto or Lisa, by fax (416-588-7017), e-mail (lift@inforamp.net) or mail. This way they can be presented to the group and discussed. Volunteer hours will be given for the time spent at the meeting. The last meeting for 1999 will be held December 2 at LIFT at 6 p.m.

WHO/WHAT

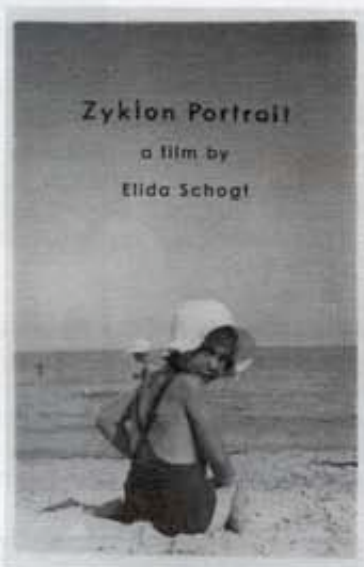
oct 99

Info for this column can be sent to the Newsletter: by mail c/o LIFT, 37 Hanna Ave. Ste. 301, Toronto ON M6K 1W5; by e-mail to Larissa at fanburke@interlog.com ; by fax to (416) 588-7017. Have a press release, press package or postcard? Why not send a copy to the Newsletter? (Try it, it's easy!)

CONGRATULATIONS to:

MIKE HOOLBOOM, who was recently awarded the Toronto Arts Award in the Media Arts Category. Eight individuals were presented with awards to recognize their crucial contributions to Toronto's cultural life. And... **JEREMY PODESWA**, whose film *The Five Senses* was awarded the Toronto-City award for Best Canadian Feature at the Toronto International Film Festival. Also, best wishes to **CAROLYNNE HEW**, **SARAH ABBOTT**, and **JUDITH DOYLE** for their future broadcasts on WTN's Shameless Shorts.

LIFT members made a great showing at the Cabbagetown Film Festival! Congratulations to **SARAH ABBOTT**, who was awarded the Grand Prize for her film *Why I Hate Bees*, **PAULA DEVONSHIRE** and **BRETT SULLIVAN**, who won both Best Comedy and Audience Favourite for *6ix*, and **SUE RIEDL**, whose film *Salami Heaven* received the award for Best Animation and was runner-up for Audience Favourite.



IN PRODUCTION:

ELIDA SCHOGT is currently in production on *The Walnut Tree*, the second part of a trilogy on Holocaust memory which started with *Zyklon Portrait*. The film is a mix of family photographs, archival stills, and original footage which questions the ability of photographs to capture personal and collective memory; the story of the walnut tree is ultimately told in the space outside and beyond the photographs. To date Elida has received funding from the TAC and LIFT.

DEANNA BOWEN is in the production stages of her latest project *Deutschland*, a mixed media project about recovery.

POSTING:

MIDI ONODERA is in post-production on a short experimental film, *The Basement Girl*. Shot in a mixture of formats including 16mm, the film is about a woman who is trying to get over a bad date.

JAMES GROUNDWATER is working on a 23-minute documentary entitled *Room to Roam*. The first in a series on urban parks across the country, it looks at the history and conservation of Toronto's High Park.

THOMAS CHAPPEL is in post on his project, *Grandpa's Treasure*, a dramatic short shot on digital 8, directed by Tom and edited by **MAJ QURESHI**. It tells the story of a brother and sister on the day of their grandfather's funeral, and the mysterious treasure that he left them which may or may not give them clues to his life.

KARA BLAKE is hard at work on a project on the Media 100. It's a documentary shot on digital video and super 8 which looks at what happens when Disneyland comes to a small, quiet town for one day, bringing with it 60,000 spectators. Kara hopes to be finished by the end of the month.

Foxy Lady, *Wild Cherry*, a 35mm dramatic short about pre-teen girls testing their sexuality, wrapped this summer and is currently in post-production. The film is a 1970s period piece written and produced by **MARLENE RODGERS** and directed by **INES BUCHLI**, starring **NATASHA GREENBLATT**, **NINA SHOCK**, **TODD DUCKWORTH** and **JACK NICHOLSEN**. It is being made with the support of the OFDC Calling Card Program, the Women in Film and Television/Kodak Vision Award and the Toronto Worldwide Short Film Festival Screenplay Award.

WHO/WHAT

ON THE SCREEN:

ELISE BEAUVAIS' beautiful animation, *Full Moon in the Forest* (which you may have been lucky enough to see at the Ward's Island screening this summer) has screened at the Cabbagetown Film Festival, the Antalya Golden Orange International Film Festival in Turkey, and the Moving Art Festival of Animation in California, where it was selected as the "Best of Cell Pro" (i.e. professional cell animation). Congratulations Elise!

More awards for **PAUL LEE'S** *The Offering*: Best Cinematography at the 3rd Rhode Island International Film Festival, and Best Art Direction and the Humanitarian Film Award, both from the 7th Chilean International Short Film Festival.

HOPE THOMPSON'S latest film, *Switch*, had its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival and went on to screen at the Vancouver International Film Festival. It has been picked up by the CBC's "Canadian Reflections" series starting in November.

MARK WIHAK'S short dramatic film *Ecstasy*, in addition to screening at TIFF, screened as a "work in progress" at Edmonton's Local Heroes Festival, and was also invited to the Montreal World Film Festival, Sudbury Cinefest and the Atlantic Film Festival in Halifax. *Ecstasy* was made with the help of grants from both the OAC and LIFT.

Festival appearances for **DEANNA BOWEN'S** *sadomasochism* include the Viper Film Festival in Switzerland and Champs Libre in Montreal.

ELIDA SCHOGT'S *Zyklon Portrait* has screenings slated for the Boston Jewish Film Festival, the Jerusalem Cinematheque, and the Margaret Mead Film and Video Festival in New York.

6ix, a short "satanic comedy" produced by **PAULA DEVONSHIRE** and directed by **BRETT SULLIVAN**, has screened at the Palm Springs International Film Festival and the Montreal World Film Festival, and has been invited to the Certamen Internacional de Cine in Barcelona, Spain.

TORY FALKENBERG'S *Dreamscape*, featuring sculptor Edward Falkenberg, had its premiere screening October 1 at Jackman Hall.

RUBA NADDA'S films are getting lots of travel these days: *so far gone* is screening at the Herland Film Festival, *do nothing* and *laila* are showing at the Seattle Underground Film Festival, *laila* is also going to the Atlantic, Barcelona and Sienna Film Festivals, *slut* is travelling to the London Film Festival, and her latest 3 shorts will be screening at Viennale -Vienna Film Festival.



SWITCH

A film by Hope Thompson

A Discussion with Phillip Barker

Compositing the Soul

By Tina Hahn

Phillip Barker has a very distinctive style. His film, *A Temporary Arrangement*, created beautiful composite images by combining 9 Super 8 frames in a grid which was transferred onto 35mm film. He recently completed a film entitled *The Soul Cages* which takes this one step further, creating a grid of 45 Super 8 films.

To accomplish this composite image, Phillip works with a grid on Plexiglas. He creates the grid by hanging lengths of exposed 35mm film side by side and tracing the frames with a permanent marker. Then, he places the grid on a grip arm, which swings in front of the scene, and outlines the positioning of the actress into the grid. The Super 8 camera is then positioned in a frame of the grid, the grid is swung out of the frame, and the camera rolls. For the next frame, the grid swings back, the camera is repositioned, and so on...

Phillip enjoys inventing new ways of looking at life. The ideas come first with both practical and narrative dimensions. For example, in *The Soul Cages*, the idea began with a series of self-portraits taken by a woman in a very fractured exploration of self. We find ourselves observing someone, observing herself. It becomes a film within a film, and expresses how Phillip feels himself when someone takes his photo - they are capturing his essence. This became the starting point for exploration - the notion of capturing the soul that exists in many cultures.

His work reflects a visual investigation that continually pushes the boundaries of his medium. To him, film is very flat and one-dimensional, it gives the illusion of depth but it is really just light on a wall. Phillip's films expand the notion of one camera and one point-of-view, by investigating film as a sculptural medium. The multiple points-of-view of his composite images are the core of his philosophy. They are a metaphor for life: there is never one way to look at a situation to derive truth, one needs to look at various angles.

cont. on pg. 22

photo: Chris Wazan
Susanna Hood in a still from *Soul Cages*,
a film by Phillip Barker



A Temporary Arrangement





Naked Filmmaker about Digital Michelle

If you own or have access to a digital video camera, a computer equipped with a FireWire port, the latest video editing software i.e. Premiere, AfterEffects, and pink fuzzy bunny slippers - you may have the makings to create a digital film ...

Road trips suck. I can't remember the time exactly but I can confirm that a suspicious encounter with an odd smelling enchilada ended with a visit to a filthy little bathroom somewhere in Tijuana. A strange time to decide to go back to school, yes, but I knew then and there, arms hugging porcelain, that a degree in film and sociology was not going to buy me a taco stand let alone another enchilada.

Naked as a Digital Jaybird

Insert digital film - 7 years later a media designer and pixel pusher for "big blue" a.k.a. IBM. This time no dirty little bathroom or extreme indigestion to get in the way of what I've always wanted to be - a filmmaker; correction - digital filmmaker. Now it is possible. In the comfort of home, naked and in pink fuzzy bunny slippers, anyone, even your next door neighbour, can create a digital film if armed with the right technology, know-how and a little bit of cash.

Stefan Avalos and Lance Weiler created *The Last Broadcast* on a lean budget using the following digital technologies: Sony dvx-1000 and a JVC DV1 digital camera; Adobe Premiere and AfterEffects; and Sonic Foundry's Sound Forge. To avoid transferring from digital to film altogether they chose to screen on a Digital Projection Power Display projector.

What about traditional film, purists ask? The visual quality of digital film does not stand up against celluloid. Kapow! What can I say, you're right it ain't the same - in fact it looks like crap, for now. But give it time, believe you me somebody somewhere

in a dark dark room will find a way to make digital film imitate or surpass the look and feel of traditional picture film. Information and communication technology is changing at such a rapid rate that we barely have time to baby step before another new "fashionable" technology affects and shifts our current daily lives. Erla Zwingle, former editor for National Geographic, poignantly remarks (from the recent issue of National Geographic in his article on globalization and culture):

Humans have been weaving commercial and cultural connections since before the first camel caravan ventured afield. In the 19th century, the postal service, newspapers, transcontinental railroads and great steam powered ships wrought fundamental changes... Now computers, the Internet, cellular phones, cable TV and cheaper jet transportation have accelerated, complicated these connections. It took television 13 years to acquire 50 million users: the Internet took only five.

Sans Celluloid

How long before traditional methods of filmmaking are replaced by digital means? I would not hazard to guess. Perhaps digital methods are only an outgrowth or an alternative way to create and distribute film. Sort of like video. Perhaps. But digital film is making its presence felt in a big way, challenging the very way films have traditionally been made. Established filmmakers are now becoming more interested in seriously experimenting and dabbling with the new technologies. For instance, Thomas Vinterberg shot his acclaimed film *Celebration* with a single video chip (CCD) consumer DV camera (\$1000-2000). Even Steven Spielberg openly recognized Vinterberg's success and praised the new possibilities of digital filmmaking. Of course, Vinterberg would be the first to acknowledge that a good story is crucial to the primary success of a film regardless of technology. Anthony Dodd

The Last Broadcast



Mantle, DOP for *Celebration*, agrees. In a recent interview with Filmmaker Magazine, Mantle affirms that when it comes to creating a film, the idea or story comes first:

I want to know about the story, the director, who the producers are, what they've done. I'm not the least bit interested in knowing that it's going to be shot on DV. What's going to excite me or lose me is the story and the energy surrounding the project. If you have a director or producer slamming his hand on the table, saying "This is a DV film!" I'll just walk away.

Internet: Theatre of the Digitally Absurd

The so-called democratizing affects of the Internet has also influenced how every day folks create and distribute "digital stuff" via websites. Though not a digital film per se, jennicam.org is a cyber (if I may be so hip) theatre that warrants a quick look into how cheap access to digital technologies is shaping our communication and social interaction. In her own words jennicam.org receives the viewer with the following:

Baring the Truth i Filmmaking

Micuda



1: a real-time look into the real life of a young woman

2: an undramatized photographic diary for public viewing esp. via Internet

As a willing actor, director, producer and technician, Jenni choreographs her environment by making the viewer a necessary living component of her live digital documentary. Jenni would not be, if the viewer were not present and often times interactive. Jenni's interactive access appeals to a voyeuristic sensibility, where one peeks into a neighbour's window hoping to catch a glimpse of the daily life of the girl next door. It is addictive. It is disturbing. It is whatever each prospective visiting viewer wishes to make of it. Whether disturbing or fascinating, a digital interactive dynamic between the messenger and the receiver is now part of our developing "cyber" landscape. Filmmakers be aware!

Pioneers of the Pixelscape

So who are the pioneers using the "digital stuff" for filmmaking? Stefan Avalos and Lance Weiler for *The Last Broadcast*,

Bennet Miller for *The Cruise*, Thomas Vinterberg for *Celebration*, Ulrike Koch for *The Saltmen of Tibet*, and even George Lucas for parts of the recently released *Stars Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace*, have all selected digital means to create their films. Stay tuned, George Lucas is apparently planning a 100% digital release for his next episode. Reduced production and distribution spending will continue to drive Hollywood's appeal for more digital dabbling.

Rumour has it that Stefan Avalos and Lance Weiler managed to shoot *The Last Broadcast* from pre to post digital production within a budget of approximately \$1000 to \$2000. Hmm...speculation has me scratching my head on this one - perhaps a detailed production account breakdown would ease my doubts. Take it as you will. I can confirm that the shift to digital filmmaking has additionally attracted such names as Gus Van Sant, Todd Verow and Scott Saunders - for reasons that going digital not only cuts down on a filmmaker's financial expense, but also allows for greater creative manipulation of sound, image, and graphics.

Indie Digital Manifesto

So what does all this "digital stuff" mean to the independent filmmaker? Below are a few reasons why independents should consider upgrading from celluloid to digital:

1. Reduce financial cost with cheap accessible technology. Edit your film at home - naked.
2. Market, publicize and potentially distribute (in the near future) your film easily on the Internet.
3. Increase creative control and experimentation with seamless sound, graphics and animation.
4. Potential satellite distribution - this one still needs a kickstart for improvement.
5. Smaller production crews -

expect a shift or loss of traditional roles and skills.

6. Competition will increase so get your digital skills early.

7. Potential flattening of the playing field between mainstream and indie.

8. Whether you like it or not the tech geeks will prevail.

9. You too can be a joeycam.org or a sallycam.org

10. Whatever your poison - always create and deliver a strong story.

Back to the Enchilada

A few years have passed since the bad enchilada incident, but since then digital filmmaking technologies have improved leaps and bounds in cost-effectiveness, accessibility and creative potential. It was a matter of time before big ugly bulky main-frame computers became slim and fashionable enough to sit on our desktops, and it will be a matter of time before more filmmakers create pure digital based films. As Todd Verow remarked at a recent visit to the New York Underground Film Festival: "Sell your film equipment while you can still get good money for it."

Michelle Micuda is a new member of LIFT. She is a media designer at IBM and enjoys writing short stories. She is currently producing a digital short.

DIGITAL FILM RESOURCES

For more information or resources on digital filmmaking and new technologies and/or tips on how to create a digital film, check out the following list of urls:

www.avif.org
www.resfest.com
www.dccmag.com
www.resmag.com
www.promax.com
www.newvenue.com
www.conduitfest.com
www.onedotzero.com
www.digitalprojection.co



As egotistical as it may be, any artist can admit that the ultimate goal of creating a body of work is essentially to have it seen by as many people as possible. It should also come as no surprise that achieving this goal is no easy feat. However, there are new distribution methods available through digital imaging technology that can help anyone put their vision out for the world to see, and avoid the middle-man. CD ROM, The World Wide Web, and even e-mail continue to grow into cost efficient outlets to display motion picture images to anyone on the planet who feels like picking them up.

The impact of this on the independent filmmaker is surely a positive one, but that is a larger discussion. We will deal with the how to for now, because the why to is theoretically quite deep. Suffice it to say in terms of the film/video maker, the power to have your work displayed may be slowly slipping out of the hands of the traditional distributors, and returning to the artists.

The big problem thus far is that unlike videotape or a film print, there is no standardized way to record and playback digital picture and sound information. When you rent a videotape, you know that the tape will play in your machine with no fuss. However in the digital video realm, there is often so much screwing around required to make it work that most people can't be bothered to use it.

You may have heard of any number of streaming video systems such as Real Player, VIVO active, and JAVA that people are using on the internet right now to see live images of business meetings, sports news, and Amsterdam sex shows

in real time. They are fast, but these systems have one thing in common: they all look bad and you have to be a 'computer person' to make them work. Most people still use telephone lines to connect to the Internet, and there quite simply isn't the bandwidth available to watch things in real time like Television, at least with any degree of quality. This discussion will not deal with "streaming" video, as I personally have yet to see any that is of acceptable quality or easy enough to make without a four year diploma from Devry.

However, the technology in video compression that involves downloading a file to your computer's own hard drive before you watch it, or which you can play off of a physical CD ROM, has reached the point where it is a viable way to distribute motion images with relatively good picture and sound quality. The main drawback is that there's a bit of a wait while they download, so you can efficiently send only videos that are roughly two minutes long at the most. It's certainly not the same as watching TV, but if you don't mind sacrificing a little bit of quality, it's relatively easy to turn your analog film clips into digital files that can be sent around the globe in seconds. The latest *Star Wars* movie distributed its trailers using this method, and 5 million people have viewed it already. The best part however, is that if you can use LIFT's Media 100, you can do it yourself pretty easily. If it's good enough for Lucas, you might be able to use it too.

There are a few methods of recording and playing back this picture data, and here we'll deal with Apple's Quicktime platform, because in my experience it's the easiest to use and looks the best. Quicktime is the name of the software (like Microsoft Office) that compresses the picture and sound information into a manageable file size, and is also able to decompress it and then play it back. You

Quickly, Quicktime

by David Blomme

also have a choice of which type of compression/decompression scheme (henceforth referred to as CODEC) you'd like to use. Think of codec selection as being just like using the 'save as' command on a word processing document made on your PC to send your friend with a Mac. You want to make sure it's a format that your audience can easily open.

I'm going to explain how to make short Quicktime movies using both the 'CINEPAK' and 'SORENSEN' codecs. The Sorenson codec actually looks much better overall than Cinepak, but it is relatively new. Your safest bet in terms of everyone being able to read your file is Cinepak. Quicktime software versions that support it are shipped with all Mac's for the last 10 years, and the Windows OS can play them back with its standard 'Media Player'.

As mentioned, Sorenson looks fantastic compared to Cinepak, but your audience must have the latest version of Quicktime (3.x and up) to play it. It's free software they can download for Mac and PC from the apple website (www.apple.com), and many people use it already, but I would estimate it at about 30% of users. Therefore if your audience isn't the type with the patience to download and install software, you're better off to sacrifice the quality and stick with Cinepak. (It's also important to note that although it's free to download Quicktime 3 from Apple, if you want to distribute it on a CD-ROM to save people the on line trip, apple will charge you for the privilege.)

So here are the instructions. As I go along I'll try and explain a few of the variables without too much computer jargon, and I will put in my suggestions for the settings (which are the result of many hours of research I had to do at an old job). As you get more comfortable, you can play around and see if you can't optimize them for each particular film. Different settings work better for different styles of shooting (e.g., lots of camera movement or action will react differently than little camera movement).

Also note that these instructions are based on LIFT's Media 100 xs, version 5.0.1. You can find additional support in the manuals.

1 ☞ You have your finished product on videotape, and you have digitized it in to the Media 100 OR you edited the project on the system and it's done. (If you've edited it on the system, make sure you render the WHOLE thing before you begin.) If you bring it in off a tape, try and leave two seconds of black off the top, then the video, and two seconds of black at the end. Any extra noise is just added waiting time for people while downloading.

2 ☞ a) If you have edited your project on the Media 100, click anywhere in the program window. You will see that the entire project now appears up in the edit suite window with a little picture of the timeline. Use the in and out points to mark just the section you want to display.

b) If you digitized the video in off a tape, load that clip in to the edit suite window. If you digitized any static, color bars, and other garbage or blank images, use the in and out marks to highlight just the section you want to make the movie of. You won't be able to edit it down later.

3 ☞ With the edit suite window highlighted, look under the File menu and select "Export."

4 ☞ A window pops up that will ask you for the settings. The top section just asks you where the new Quicktime file is to be saved, and make sure there's about 100 megs free on the drive to be safe. The "name" section is self explanatory, except that you MUST remember to put the suffix ".mov" at the end of the filename or it won't work on PC's. Also avoid any punctuation, and it shouldn't be longer than 6 characters.

5 ☞ In the "Render As:" section, select "Quicktime" from the pull down menu.

6 ☞ Click the checkbox next to "Video Options."

7 ☞ The first pull down menu is for screen size. Basically it is how large you want the little video image to be. If you select full frame (640x480) chances are that 99% of the

people who try and watch it will have it run very badly, so don't bother. Half frame is 320x240, and I recommend this size for videos two minutes or less. Any longer and the size (read: waiting time) of the file people will have to download will get too big. Quarter frame is 160x120 and is really tiny, but will run the smoothest and it won't take as long to download.

8 ☞ Turn off the checkbox reading "By reference."

9 ☞ If your clip has audio, check the "Audio Options" selection. In short, I recommend setting the first box to "8 bit", the second to "Mono" and the third to "22.050". Considering the image is your main concern, these settings are good enough for our purposes, and most computer speakers suck anyway.

10 ☞ The area for selection gives you two choices, source or select. Basically if your video clip or sequence is exactly as you want it on its own, select "source". If you had to mark in and out points for when it begins and ends in step 2, choose "select".

11 ☞ Hit the "Options" button under the video section.

12 ☞ A new dialogue box opens up.

- For Compressor, choose either Cinepak or Sorenson based on the criteria mentioned earlier
- Under Colors choose "millions" (not "millions +")
- Set the "Quality" slider to "High"
- Under the motion section, set the frame rate to 24 if your clip has a lot of camera movement or fast action, and set it to 15 if the image is relatively static.
- Next to "Key Frame", set this to roughly half of the frames per second value (e.g. if you entered 24 frames per second in the motion section, set the keyframe value to 12 frames etc.)
- Next to "Limit Data Rate To", the settings will differ depending on whether you used the Sorenson or Cinepak codec;
 - For Cinepak, if your frame size is 'half' set this to 120. If your frame size is 'quarter', set it to 80.
 - For the Sorenson codec, if your frame size is half set this to 70, and 50 for quarter frame size.

13 ☞ Hit OK to close this dialogue box, and then again in the original dialogue box. It begins rendering and you're on your way.

That's it. Now you will watch the little progress bar SLOWLY crawl to the right until you are done. The time it takes to render varies on which settings you chose, but count on roughly an hour to an hour and a half of rendering time per video minute. It is a very slow process.

In the end you'll have a nifty little file that you can proceed to put on a CD ROM, post to a web page or the usenet, or maybe e-mail to friends. You can quit the media 100 software, then open the file to see what it looks like before you go.

The file size will vary, but to give you an idea: the *Star Wars* trailer is two and a half minutes long, and at roughly the "half screen" size, it's 13MB. Not too shabby, but it will clog up some people's email a little, so try and let anyone you send it to know to expect a few minutes to download the file.

Best case scenario is that millions worldwide clamor to download your masterpiece and the studios bang down your door. At the very least, it's a nice way for Mom, Dad, and Uncle Gary to see what you do for a living without having to go to Cinecycle and sit with those frightening looking "film people."

TIFF '99

by Larissa Fan

Well, I didn't go to any galas or fancy parties, the closest I came to a celebrity spotting was nearly running into Don McKellar on my bike, and I got a sore throat from sitting in too many freezing theatres, so I guess you could call my TIFF-going experience a bit of a bust. (I know, I know...what a waste of a press pass you must be thinking.) But I did see lots of interesting films, got some shopping in along Bloor St., and had some fine Thai food on Yonge St.

What differentiates the Toronto International Film Festival from some of the other film festivals in Toronto? It's business, business, business. The stars, the glamour, the parties? Business. The cell phones, the limos, the lunches? All business. This year the Park Hyatt hotel was the hive of festival activity - Industry Centre, Press Office, Symposium sessions; a whirl of stars, filmmakers, media, publicists, and festival hangers-on. Cell phones never stopped ringing and coffee was being imbibed at a steady rate. Even if you didn't have a festival pass and couldn't get tickets to the screenings you wanted, you could just stand in the lobby of the Park Hyatt and soak up the atmosphere and that would be a festival experience in itself.

It's what may make you cynical about the festival, but it's also why for so many people it's a great place to screen a film. Because film is, after all, a business along with everything else it can be. For a short filmmaker the appeal is obvious - you might actually get some publicity for your film, and when else in Toronto can you get your average movie-goer to take a week off of work to immerse themselves in film, big-name Hollywood movies yes, but also Canadian shorts, foreign films, documentaries, you name it? We all know that there are other and more sympatico venues for independent and experimental film in Toronto, but heck, it's nice to have some glamour once in a while. (If only it weren't for those damn cell phones...)



Still from *Fries with That* by Chris McKay

Rogers Symposium 99

Every year the festival runs a series of panel discussions in the Industry Symposium. This year the Symposium took place the Monday and Tuesday of the festival in both the Park Hyatt and across the street at the Four Seasons. The big topic was digital filmmaking, with sessions including a demonstration of digital projection and panel discussions entitled "In Perpetuity: Distribution in the Digital World" and "Evolution of the Revolution: The Next Stage of Digital Filmmaking" (presented by Peter Broderick of Next Wave Films). Other panels included "Be Savvy Baby! How to Make the Media Work for You," "Telling the Real Story: Docs on the Cutting Edge," and "They Shoot, We Score: Anatomy of a Film Composer Agreement."

One of the most interesting and useful panels was the IFFCON pitch session. The idea behind the session is that participants who want to pitch put their business card in a bowl, and those whose names are drawn present their pitch to a panel of industry execs who then discuss the pitch and offer advice. The panelists included representatives from Alliance Atlantis, Good Machine, Fox and Film Four Britain. Because of its interactive approach, the session avoided the dryness and occasional lack of focus that plagued some of the other panel discussions. While I've heard tales of the critiques in past pitch sessions being fairly brutal and unkind, this panel provided constructive yet gentle criticism that I don't think left anyone feeling crushed. Like anything else, there is an art to a good pitch which is quite separate

from the quality of the idea. It isn't necessarily about being a natural salesperson, but about preparing, rehearsing, and including all the important elements of theme, plot, character and tone concisely, while at the same time conveying your enthusiasm for the project.

You need an Industry Pass to attend the Symposium, and it isn't cheap (\$500 for an all-access pass), but keep in mind that it also gets you into the industry screenings, which are rarely full to capacity, and which means you don't have to plan which films you want to see a month in advance. You undoubtedly will meet other filmmakers, writers and producers, and if you're good at that kind of thing, you might meet someone who could be useful to you. If the cell phones and suits drive you nuts, or you are simply a poverty-stricken filmmaker, you can watch all of the symposium on Rogers from the safety and comfort of your own home. Rogers in fact has 24 hour coverage(!) of the festival, including all the press conferences, so you won't miss a second of the festival experience.

The Films

I don't envy the Perspective Canada programmers - they are bound to get flak about their choices, and they probably know, have met or have even worked with many of the filmmakers whose work was not selected. Perspective Canada is in fact the only section of the festival that is programmed by a panel rather than an individual programmer, probably in an attempt to diffuse some of the responsibility. My quibble is not with the individual films chosen (there will, after all, always be films in a festival which will make you scratch your head and think "How the heck did that get programmed?") but in their grouping into programmes. Now, the shorts programmes at the festival aren't publicized as theme programmes per se, but undoubtedly the films were grouped together according to certain shared themes or elements. I'm not necessarily against thematic

TIFF '99 cont.

below the belt



directed by Dominique Cardona & Laurie Colbert



writer/director Mark Wihak



Wendy Tilby and Amanda Forbis



Switch, director Hope Thompson

programming - some of the best shorts programmes I've seen have been thematic - but only if the films are both similar and different enough that they can add to and resonate with each other. In several cases at TIFF the tones and styles were just too similar, so that the sum ended up being less than its parts.

One such programme was one based around family and memory, which included David Sutherland's *My Father's Hands*, a well-constructed and acted drama of father and son reconciliation, and Alexandra Grimanis' *Mothers of Me*, a reflection on the history of mental illness in the filmmaker's family. All LIFT bias aside, the highlight of the programme was Elida Schogt's *Zyklon Portrait*, a spare and moving film created through an examination of Zyklon B, the chemical used in the Nazi gas chambers. Weaving together evocative imagery, a dispassioned voice-over about the chemical compound, and a conversation between herself and her mother, the filmmaker communicates the pain and sadness surrounding memories of the Holocaust. In the same programme, Mieko Ouchi's *By This Parting* is an interesting and poetic experimental film which alludes to memories of the internment of Japanese-Canadians, and celebrates their strength and survival.

Another was a programme around childhood moments and coming of age. Mark Wihak's *Ecstasy* is an assured and charming dramatic short about Stacey, a rave girl who sees God. The roles of Stacey and her friends are fresh and well-acted, and the story is told seamlessly. Most of the other films in the same programme were also strong, including a hilarious short, *Toy Soldiers* by Jackie May, in which a man reminisces about stealing his friend's prized toy soldier, and Michele Muzzi's *Tuba Girl*, a sweet and kooky story about a girl and her tuba. But almost without exception the films shared a similar look, style and tone (in addition to their thematic link), which in the end detracted rather than added to their strengths.

One of the strongest programmes was a gay and lesbian-themed collection of shorts. Dominique Cardona and Laurie Colbert's *Below the Belt* is a beautifully shot film about two young women in love trying to

deal with their emotions; it has been garnering attention at festivals around the world. Robert Kennedy's *Hi, I'm Steve* is a grainy, hilarious and ultra low-budget film about a man's search for love in the classifieds. Paul Lee's gorgeous 35mm short *The Offering* communicates love and longing between two monks over the course of four seasons, with not a word uttered. Jean-Francois Monnette's *Where Lies the Homo?* is a funny and occasionally brilliant, if somewhat meandering, look at growing up and coming out, told through a combination of archival pop culture and original footage. And the latest from Hope Thompson, *Switch*, is a charming and campy tale of love between two switchboard operators, just loaded with 1940's atmosphere.

I also recommend two animated shorts that screened together in a programme: Christopher McKay's claymation film *Fries with That*, and *When the Day Breaks*, an animation out of the NFB by Wendy Tilby and Amanda Forbis. Christopher's film is a bittersweet tale of a family trying to cope with death, and the comfort to be found in french fries. It also played recently at the LIFT Ward's Island screening. *When the Day Breaks* is a slightly wonky film about the fragility of life as seen through the eyes of Ruby the pig; it features great songs, and a beautifully textured look achieved by drawing and painting on photocopies.

I didn't manage to catch all the Canadian shorts - my apologies to LIFT-ers whose films I missed. My biggest tip for the festival next year? Bring a sweater with you to the theatre, no matter how hot it is outside (trust me on this one). Oh, and get a cell phone.





INTERVIEW WITH MIGUEL ROCHA: A DIALOGUE

BY ADAM BASQUILL

Adam Basquill interviewed Miguel Rocha for the Newsletter about his latest film, *Lost Heroes*, a first feature. Co-produced with his wife Trish and shot in Portugal and Toronto, the film was completely self-funded.

"You know what I don't have respect for? I don't have respect for people who look at life as a way to do one thing...I don't like people that live their lives doing one thing, and one thing only...that's what I don't have respect for." So says Miguel Rocha, paradoxical filmmaker, both in life and in his docudrama feature *Lost Heroes*. Born in "the land of pork and cheese" Porto, Portugal, Rocha immigrated to Canada at age five with his family only to return years later some cynicism, passions, ambition...and a cinematic vision.

And what a vision *Lost Heroes* is. Rocha's sense for photographic merit rings true in this multi-themed feature of social discontent in present day Portugal. An appreciation for original art is no secret to the filmmaker, and one observes such key influences reflected all around him. Books on Picasso, Cézanne, and especially Robert Rauschenberg adorn the bookshelf. His own paintings and captivating photography canvas the walls of his downtown Toronto apartment. All this coupled with hundreds of vinyl LPs of sometimes rare choices of music, including: the Velvet Underground, Ornette Coleman, and the Beatles.

Rocha began the exploration at University of Toronto studying architecture, and gathered momentum in Ontario College of Art and Design studying film, photography, and various forms of artistic theory. He directed award winning shorts (William F. White award for *Miscommunication*) that captured the imagination of his audience...or, perhaps more accurately, they reflect the captured imagination of Rocha himself.

Intrigued by the collage-like manner of art, music, and books displayed in Rocha's place, I inquire: can there be any original ideas? Indeed, it is one of "the most compelling questions" Rocha suggests. Eyeing his collection of music, I introduce the notion of conformity in popular music. Excitedly, Rocha makes a reference to a Toronto teenaged trend, and offers this: "once I drove down Yonge street playing Coltrane's 'Love Supreme'...the most beautiful album ever made." He admits eliciting some "bad looks" but angrily adds "how can you give 'Love Supreme' bad looks?" Embracing this opportunity I ask: is then "Love Supreme" an original? He elaborates: "there are always influences (if you) put art in a historical context...look at it in the context of the time.

(One should) try to be original in work not by trying to escape influences but by mixing influences.

In *Lost Heroes* we see such a mix. Set in modern day Portugal *Lost Heroes* follows a young man's return to his birthplace from whence he escaped as a boy with his mother, so many years before in the heat of the 1974 "non-violent" revolution. It flirts, sometimes dangerously, with such themes as racism, social discontent, family "history," and the so called Americanization of Europe. There even is an attempt at a musical sub-text, which explores "free jazz" His film presents itself like a monologue, and he suggests that in "maintaining a monologue with (the) audience" he hopes to "develop dialogue(s)" between people.

"I know that it was a military coup that overthrew a fascist government ...and I know it was a communist government that took power after the coup...I know 'things'...I know generalizations...I didn't want to deal on the politics of the past 25 years of Portuguese history...I wanted to deal with people...and racism...I wanted to deal with things that I see that are evident to me when I visit, and I visit quite bit...because my family lives there still. Originally I didn't want to mention Portugal...in the whole film. I don't feel like this is a film about Portugal... I feel the issues are universal... the issues



Miguel Rocha on the set of "Lost Heroes"

I am dealing with, they are anchored in Portugal...(and) because of the historical context that it appears in, I wanted to make the film as graphic as possible."

Additionally, despite the fact that Rocha has captured so gracefully the raw beauty of Portugal, ethnic celebrations, and cultural traditions, the filmmaker mixes this sense of beauty with the angry sub-themes and graphic imagery. Although mystified, and yet cinematically fulfilled, the viewer remains unclear as to the point of the film. This is, however, not altogether unsatisfying. Questioning Rocha brings no clear answers either. He seems to relish this typical audience member response. Rocha remains as challenging in an interview as his film does in intent, offering only this: "(You) need to challenge

your audience and teach them new things, and open their eyes..."

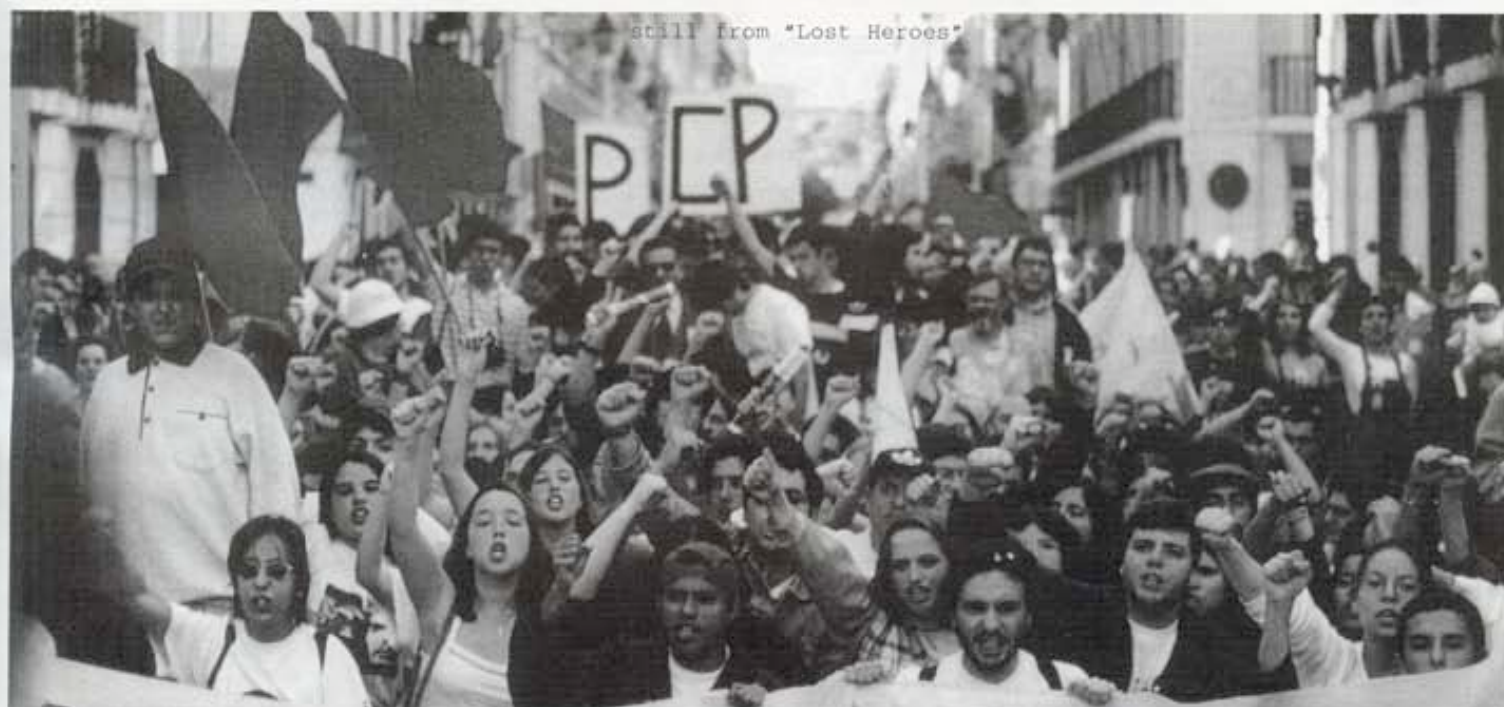
Opened eyes, indeed. *Lost Heroes* can sometimes be very uncomfortable to watch, with intensely graphic scenes such as the traditional-style slaughter of a pig, to the race motivated throat slitting of a black immigrant. I suggested that this is a sample of the trouble I had with the film's use of multiple imagery... imagery that seemed to be disjointed or unrelated, although powerful. Says Rocha: "they were not put in there so much as realities, as much as metaphors...the film is Cinema Verité...it was (supposed) to be like walking down the street, images everywhere...even though a lot of those images don't mix, that's sort of life...that is, life is not about linearity...things happen to you

all of a sudden...I think everything is important...and sometimes nothing is important...it's not even like anything goes; I think everything goes."

The film embraces this philosophy. The aforementioned graphical images are often juxtaposed, however, with stunning cinematography, a sometimes rejuvenating jazz accompaniment, and quaintly familiar scenes reflecting the joy of family and community. One feels like he or she is watching a series of paintings that do not relate in subject. Rocha packs his film with such imagery. "Just like Godard said in the 60s, when he said he was going to put Vietnam in every film he makes...I am going to put East Timor in every film I make...I don't even care if it doesn't fit," Rocha makes it "fit" however, and remains consistent in his use of collaging images.

Technically the film is also a mix. Although primarily shot in Super 16, a captivating Super 8 childhood sequence and a brief video segment provide an enjoyable mélange. It somehow works, in light of the multiple themes. Rocha claims to have had little troubles shooting overseas, and in light of this I found myself impressed with his use of the varying media formats. The use of black and white and colour, and sometimes curious camera angles (a shot of the two main characters running through a rural landscape is shot from the perspective of the blades of field grass) is refreshing.

The Portuguese setting and content is not lost on a western audience, as the film looks at life from the eyes of a westernized ex-patriot. The film does appear to be a Portuguese social



still from "Lost Heroes"

statement however, one focused on the now of Portugal in light of its history. Through its main characters we experience the anger and joy of a childhood couple at odds by circumstance, and this does reflect Portugal's awkward transition. However, I get the impression that this film is more about the filmmaker himself.

Rocha states that the "film is like my frame of mind today...what is in this film right now, these are the issues that I am thinking about today." Whether there is a connection to his own family emigration to Canada in the film, Rocha was not specific. However, when pressed on this suggested personal theme, Rocha states: "You can't go home...I think it's very dangerous...(corrects himself) I think it's potentially dangerous to return somewhere, where you weren't made welcome in the first place."

Rocha has similar sentiments to express about trying to make a living as a filmmaker in Canada. He expresses his frustration very diplomatically, and points out the

positives in his life. "My friends are really strong...open to people's opinions...I am really happy I have been able to surround myself with people like that. I haven't lost friends because of my honesty and they haven't lost me because of their honesty." He and his wife Trish have had their share of the professional "run around." His sentiments? "Don't depend on other people...find any means possible of getting your work done...I think Trish and I did it, and we're going to pay the consequences financially...but at least we did it...we never regret it...I'm really proud of that...I don't care how many festivals reject it...we've got a beautiful film here."

Rocha and his wife make a powerful team, and he is very direct in establishing this. On Trish he offers simply this: "You asked who is my single greatest influence? There you go. I am the luckiest man on earth. We have a great respect for each other. I think we're very open to each other...we're very honest...and we

discuss everything...Communication is the most important...we both come out of broken families, (and) I think we realize that the most important thing in a relationship is conversation...maintaining an open dialogue...I feel the same way about art."

So what sort of dialogue has *Lost Heroes* opened? In search of this amidst a two hour Rocha-style collage of ideas, I believe I learned just what. I asked if an artist's work could even be theorized about. Rocha responded that the "artist knows his work better than anyone else...(and) I would love to hear the artist theorize their own work." Later in the interview, however, he paradoxically states "I wish I knew myself better...or maybe I am happy I don't know myself that well...I don't think you ever want to know yourself completely, and I don't think you ever want anybody else to know yourself completely." Given the manner in which *Lost Heroes* mirrors Rocha's all too familiar dichotomy, open dialogues will no doubt ensue.

Compositing the Soul

Technically, the structure he uses to create these shots builds boundaries within which he can play. He never knows what the actor will do, inviting her to improvise what is done within the framework of the grid. In this way, he does not let the technical overpower the emotional importance. This is what creates a tension in his films that makes them a joy to watch.

There is a playful, curious quality to Phillip's work. He is challenged by new ideas, and new ways of breaking the boundaries of the frames which contain us as filmmakers. Next, he wants to make a film where the camera is looking forwards and backwards, like using a rearview mirror as you drive a car.

If you want to see Phillip's work, Phillip will present a programme of his films (*A Temporary Arrangement*, *I am Always Connected*, and *Soul Cages*) along with an artist's talk as part of the Cinematheque's Independents series at Jackman Hall, Wednesday October 20 at 6:30 pm.

NIGHTINGALE & ASSOCIATES PRESENTS:

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KODAK BASIC CINEMATOGRAPHY WORKSHOP: 2-day hands-on workshop with Lance Carlson
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LIGHTS! CAMERA! MODEM!: GETTING WORK IN THE MULTIMEDIA INDUSTRY: a 3-hour workshop with multimedia guru Bill Sweetman
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Saturday November 13/Sunday November 14 - Cost: \$289

MARKETING YOUR PRODUCT/PROJECT ON THE INTERNET 101: an intensive 3-hour session with multimedia guru Bill Sweetman
Saturday November 20 - Cost: \$99

FINANCING YOUR TELEVISION PROJECT: OR HOW TO USE OTHER PEOPLE'S MONEY AND KEEP SOME FOR YOURSELF: a one-day seminar led by Heather Marshall, Deputy Director of Production Financing at CBC, with guest speakers
Saturday November 20 - Cost: \$169

INTRODUCTION TO FINANCING INTERNATIONAL CO-PRODUCTION: a one-day class led by Philip Alberstat with guest speakers from the industry.
Saturday November 27 - Cost: \$169

STUNT FIGHTING FOR THE SCREEN: This one day intensive workshop, led by professional stuntman Randy Butcher, teaches the basics of stunt fighting for the camera.
Sunday November 28 - Cost: \$125

VIDEO PRODUCTION: a hands-on workshop with Lance Carlson. Covers digital formats, setup and shooting procedures.
Saturday November 27/Sunday November 28 - Cost: \$289

WRITING FOR ANIMATION - INTRODUCTION
Friday December 10 - Cost: \$69

WRITING FOR ANIMATION - MASTER CLASS: senior level class for produced writers who are interested in writing for animation
Saturday December 11 - Cost: \$249

A Side Note:

Phillip experienced problems with his Super 8 stock. He found that every second cartridge jammed. As a result of this problem, Phillip found himself working with a 1:1 shooting ratio, instead of the 2:1 ratio he had budgeted for. This meant no second takes, and, with the complicated shots he was planning, a lot of headaches.

I asked Margaret at Exclusive Film and Video for an update on the problem. Apparently Phillip, Carolyn Wong and another filmmaker all had the same problem, the result of a bad batch of Super 8 cartridges. She thinks it resulted from too much heat during the manufacturing of the cartridges, causing the film to crimp at the beginning. This is a one-time incident that has not reoccurred, and is the first time Margaret has heard of such a problem in the 3 years that Ektachrome 7240 (ASA 125) has been on the market.

Due to the diligent work of the staff of Exclusive, they traced the problem to a specific batch number that was sold by West Camera sold over a period of 3-4 weeks. West Camera eventually pulled the batch from their shelves. As soon as this problem was brought to Kodak's attention, they went overboard in also pulling the stock and reimbursing the filmmakers involved with stock and money. Kudos to Exclusive, West Camera and Kodak for taking care of the problem.

ADVERTISING RATES (PER ISSUE)

Classified ads (approx. 30 words):

LIFT members
\$ 5.00
Non-members
\$ 25.00

Ads:

1/8 page (3 1/2" x 2")	\$ 60.00
1/4 page (3 5/8" x 4 5/8")	\$110.00
1/3 page (2 1/2" x 9 1/2")	\$120.00
1/2 page vertical (3 1/4" x 9 1/2")	\$180.00
1/2 page horizontal (7" x 4 3/4")	\$180.00
full page (7" x 9 1/2")	\$240.00
inside back cover (7" x 9 1/2")	\$360.00
outside back cover (7" x 9 1/2")	\$400.00

Discounted rates for more than 1 issue.
Upcoming deadlines: Nov. 12, Jan. 14, Mar. 18
Contact the office for details. 588-6444.

calendar

Every Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. - Cinematheque Ontario presents the new season of **"THE INDEPENDENTS,"** featuring works by Canadian artists, film and video makers, working below the distribution radar. Due to the series' popularity, this year screenings will be held in Jackman Hall. Phone 368-3456 for info.

Oct. 21-23 - The big news is the **TRANZ <--> TECH TORONTO INTERNATIONAL VIDEO ART BIENNIAL**, presented by Pleasure Dome, Trinity Square Video & V tape - with 3 days of screenings, installations, artist presentations and parties! Taking place Oct. 21-23 at Latvian Hall, 491 College St. For more information, call Lisa at V-tape, 351-1317, or by email at lisas@vtape.org. The complete schedule can be downloaded from the Pleasure Dome website at home.ican.net/~pdome

FOR PLEASURE DOME'S FALL SEASON, check out the website (above) or call 656-5577 to become a member and receive information.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 7 P.M.: The Images Festival of Independent Film & Video presents a benefit screening of Jeremy Podeswa's award-winning film, *The Five Senses*. 7 p.m. at the Cumberland, 159 Cumberland Ave. Pre-screening cocktails just around the corner at Ba-Ba-Luu, 136 Yorkville Ave. (lower level) at 5:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10, available at the door or in advance from Pages Bookstore, 256 Queen St. W., or the Images Festival office, 401 Richmond St. W. #448. Call 971-8405 for details.

ads & classifieds:

NEWSLETTER NOTICE BOARD:

The Newsletter accepts story ideas on an ongoing basis. Need volunteer hours? Want to write?

Phone/fax LIFT or e-mail Larissa at: fanburke@interlog.com

UPCOMING ISSUES

Jan/Feb 2000

Yes, it's the requisite Millennium issue. Make your mark on the new millennium, write for the Newsletter!

Annual Storyboard: We are compiling the annual listing of LIFT films completed in past year. Send info on your film to LIFT including title, length, format and a brief description. Mail, fax, email or drop-off at LIFT.

Submission deadline: Jan. 14



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Revellers and Revelation at the Silent Auction



Miss & Mr LIFT Y2K (Eva Ziemsen & Steve Sanguedolce) hit the dance floor



Glam party-goers Karyn Sandlos and Roy Mitchell



Fabulous party organizer Keith Cole and an unsuspecting victim



Miss LIFT Y2K is crowded (L to R: Kirsten Johnson, Eva Ziemsen, Keith Cole)



Marcos Arriaga & Paula Tiberious do a film-a-raoke scene from Jason Romilly's "Spent"



Simone Jones and Hope Thompson mix some serious drinks



LIFT-ers peruse the silent auction table



Tobi Lampard uses strong arm techniques to sell raffle tickets

Dance performance
by Newton Moraes



Michelle Messina and Roberto Ariganello enjoy some frosty beverages