

20 YEARS OF LIFT



editorial Lorissa Fon

I remember when I first graduated from art college – three films under my belt and keen to make another one – and found myself staring into a big fat void. I discovered it's a little harder to make a film without the support of free equipment, keen and readily available crew members, and encouragement (not to mention the incentive of year end deadlines!).

And then there was LIFT. First I joined just to get the mailings and newsletter, then I started to take some workshops – in documentary filmmaking, hand processing, grant-writing, optical printing – and finally worked up the motivation to start applying for grants. Luckily, I got one – and so I started to work on a film. The road has been excruciatingly slow and full of frustrating detours (like work, exhaustion, procrastination, babies) which lead me far from the route of completing the damn thing, but at least I am working on it. (Which is better than not working on it, right?) And I know when I run into a technical problem or just need some encouragement, there will be someone at LIFT who can give it to me.

It is no mean feat to make a film, even an itchy-bitsy teeny weeny one. And it would be that much harder without an organization like LIFT, which provides not only equipment but education and information, and a connection with other filmmakers who have no doubt encountered the same problems you have. Like any arts organization, LIFT survives and thrives on the dedication of its supporters, funders, volunteers, and staff. I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank everyone, especially the board and staff, whose hard work and commitment ensure that LIFT continues to be. (Because that just makes life easier for me.)

If you are a new member, and are perhaps shy about becoming more involved with LIFT because you don't know anybody, I encourage you to take that step – your contribution will be welcomed (in fact you may become more involved than you ever wanted to be!)

LIFT is celebrating its 20th Anniversary this year, which provides a nice opportunity to reflect on where LIFT has come from, where it is now, and what we want it to be in the future. LIFT's 20th Anniversary celebrations in April, "Celluloid: Celebrating 20 Years of Independent Filmmaking at LIFT," will both celebrate the past and hopefully generate some dialogue about the future. As a way to get the ball rolling, this issue features interviews with LIFT members new and old who talk about their filmmaking practice, and where they see LIFT fitting in. Happy 20th Anniversary LIFT, and here's hoping for many more!



The Canadian Council
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Ottawa K1P 6K7

Le Conseil canadien
des Arts
Ottawa K1P 6K7



THE LIAISON OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS OF TORONTO

Jan/Feb, 2001

Volume 21, No. 1

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Tracy German, David Noncoff, Tobl Lampard,
David Cheung

NEWLY-APPOINTED MEMBERS:

Malcolm Rogge, Jonathon Culp

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, 568-6444; Fax, 568-7017.

LIFT's website address is:
<http://www.lift.on.ca>
e-mail: lift@inforamp.net
Anyone with suggestions or ideas, please call Deonna at the LIFT office, or e-mail: fanburke@interlog.com

Canada Post Publication Mail Agreement #1463969

board report

Jeff Sterne

In the aftermath of the holiday season, the LIFT Board of Directors accumulated two new board members. Malcolm Rogge and Jonathan Culp both have a wealth of knowledge from previous arts and non-profit organizations, and have already become important voices on the board. Any LIFT member can approach the board and ask to be a part of the process – we haven't turn down anyone so far. Individuals that wish to become a voice on the board can do so at any time, but they are officially voted on at LIFT's Annual General Meeting in the Spring. The best scenario happens when an individual joins the board and brings on an opinion or enthusiasm from the community that the board has not considered. The more voices we have on the board the more ears we have in the community.

executive director's note:

Once again, there is big news in the land of LIFT for the writing of this newsletter.

As you all are probably aware, the new alarm and access system has been installed for the protection of LIFT's holdings, and members old and new must orient themselves to this new system BEFORE coming in to work after hours by consulting with the staff.

That said, we are proud to announce that our very own Christina Battle has been awarded the position of Technical Co-Ordinator. We thank Anna Malkin for her hard work and dedication while filling in during Lisa Hayes' leave of absence, and wish her well.

As you can see, there are many new and exciting things on LIFT's horizon, including an exciting roster of screening events. January's artist talk featuring Kristiina Szabo, Nathan Fleet, and Siu Ta was a resounding success, with an unprecedented attendance and peals of laughter that could be heard throughout the halls. It was an exciting precursor of great things to come... And our 20th Anniversary events are shaping up to be an exciting series of events as well. Our 4-day screening programme at Cinematheque will take place from April 3-6, and our Symposium at Images Festival of Independent Film and Video will occur during the following weekend on the 14th and 15th, and LIFT will also be hosting the new videotape library at Images as well. Please find enclosed our brochure (if you open it up, you will find a poster on the back) and details on the back cover of this newsletter.

All the best,

Barb Sniderman

departments

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Living at LIFT: an Interview with Bruce McDonald (1989)
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Jason MacDermott

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Future Projections: an Interview with Alexi Manis
Jason MacDermott

features

On The Cover:

LIFT 345 Adelaide W. 1985:

The LIFT gang at 345 Adelaide St. West, Ste. 405, April 29, 1985

photo credit: John Porter

UPCOMING FESTIVAL DEADLINES:

NAME OF FESTIVAL: **SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL**
CITY, PROVINCE, COUNTRY: GLEBE, AUSTRALIA
DATE OF FESTIVAL: 06/8-22/2001 DEADLINE: 2/19/2001
PHONE: 61 2 9660 3844
EMAIL: info@sydfilm-fest.com.au WEB ADDRESS: <http://www.sydfilm-fest.com.au>

NAME OF FESTIVAL: **SHANGHAI INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL**
CITY, PROVINCE, COUNTRY: SHANGHAI, CHINA
DATE OF FESTIVAL: 6/9-17/2001 DEADLINE: 3/10/2001
PHONE: 21 62537115
EMAIL: siff@public4.sta.net.cn WEB ADDRESS: <http://www.siff.com>

NAME OF FESTIVAL: **TRENTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF MOUNTAINS AND EXPLORATION**
CITY, PROVINCE, COUNTRY: TRENTO, ITALY
DATE OF FESTIVAL: 04/27-05/05/2001 DEADLINE: 3/10/2001
PHONE: 0461 98 61 20
EMAIL: mail@mountainfilmfestival.trento.it WEB ADDRESS: <http://www.mountainfilmfestival.trento.it>

NAME OF FESTIVAL: **YAMAGATA INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL**
CITY, PROVINCE, COUNTRY: SHINJUKU-KU, TOKYO, JAPAN
DATE OF FESTIVAL: 10/03-09/2001 DEADLINE: 03/31/2001
PHONE: 81-3-5362-0672
EMAIL: yidff@bekkoame.ne.jp

NAME OF FESTIVAL: **SPLICE THIS!**
CITY, PROVINCE, COUNTRY: TORONTO, ON, CANADA
DATE OF FESTIVAL: DEADLINE: 03/31/2001
PHONE: 416 537 2256
EMAIL: coldsore@interlog.com WEB ADDRESS: <http://www.interlog.com/~coldsore>

NAME OF FESTIVAL: **32ND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF INDIA**
CITY, PROVINCE, COUNTRY: NEW DELHI, INDIA
DATE OF FESTIVAL: 10/10-20/2001 DEADLINE: 08/31/2001
PHONE: +91 11 4615953 / 4694920/4697167

Guidelines and application forms for this list of festivals are on file and available for photocopying (10c 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.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS:

Ed Video Media Arts Centre is seeking submissions by independent curators and established media artists for the upcoming Programming season of September 2001 - September 2002. Submissions deadline is **March 31th 2001**. All submissions will be considered by the Programming Committee and notice will be given by April 30th.

Work may include audio installation and broadcast, video and film presentations, new media installation and webcast, video installation and performance. The work must be Canadian. Installations are presented for two weeks, screenings and presentations are 1 - 3 hours long.

Please include: A letter of intent, a description of the exhibition's theme or of the produced work to be screened/presented,

any names of planned artists or works to present, a short biography, a Curriculum Vitae or list of personal productions if appropriate, and appropriate support material.

Curators/artists are required to present a critical statement in writing for the presentation and/or an introductory talk. A budget is not necessary. The Programmer assists curators and artists with their presentations. Standard fees are paid.

Send submissions to: Attention Programming Committee, Ed Video Media Arts Centre, PO Box 1629, 16A Wyndham St. N., Guelph, ON N1H 6R7.

For more information contact Mary Cross, Artistic Director for Ed Video Media Arts Centre (519) 836-9811, edvideo@albedo.net

The Canadian Film Centre's **Worldwide Short Film Festival** is now accepting submissions for the 2001 Festival. Festival dates are June 6-10, 2001. All genres of short film (under 40 minutes) are accepted, and over \$40,000 in cash and prizes will be awarded. There is no entry fee. Entry form available on-line at www.cdnfilmcentre.com or phone (416) 445 1446. Deadline for submissions: **March 26, 2001**.

Call for Submissions: the Niagara Indie Film Festival is pleased to announce this year's call for submissions. The deadline is **April 13, 2001** and the festival kicks off June 21. Check the NIFF website forms at www.niagaraindiefilmfest.org for further information and downloadable entry form or call 905-688-5550 (3998).

announcements:

NEW ALARM SYSTEM IN THE CO-OP

As you may already know, LIFT has recently purchased and installed a new swipe card ACCESS SYSTEM and a new BURGLAR ALARM SYSTEM to help protect the holdings of the co-op from future thefts. It is IMPERATIVE that every member who wishes to access LIFT's facilities after business hours CONSULT WITH LIFT STAFF DURING BUSINESS HOURS MONDAY TO FRIDAY 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM to become oriented with this new system.

WORKSHOP COMMITTEE MEETINGS

LIFT's Workshop committee is looking for new members! LIFT organizes workshops throughout the year on all aspects of filmmaking from shooting with Super 8 to budgeting for feature films. If you have any suggestions for workshops or if you want to help plan them, please come to the next meeting. Members receive 20 volunteer hours for committee service. NEXT MEETINGS: March 15, April 19

SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE MEETING

The special events committee helps to organize and run the various events LIFT hosts each year. Upcoming events include:

LIFT's 20th Anniversary (April), and our Spring Garage Sale. Members receive 20 volunteer hours for working on this committee. This is a great way to gather your volunteer hours and get more involved in the co-op. The SEC meets on the 4th Monday of each month at 6pm. Contact Christina at the office for more information.

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Join the NEWSLETTER Committee if you are interested in the direction of LIFT's Newsletter or in writing for the Newsletter. Members receive 20 volunteer hours for committee service. Call Deanna at the office to RSVP. The committee meets the first Tuesday of every month at 6:15 pm. NEXT MEETINGS: March 6, April 3, May 1

PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE

LIFT's Programming Committee is looking for new members! Join the committee if you are interested in the direction of LIFT's Artist Talks. Members receive volunteer hours for each meeting they attend. The committee meets on the last Thursday of every month at 6:15 pm in the LIFT office. NEXT MEETINGS: March 29, & April 26

LIFT'S MEMBERS' FILM LIBRARY

Drop off a copy of your past & present film gems for other LIFT members to view. The library is another great way to show your works to other keen filmmakers in Toronto. Your works are secure in the LIFT office. . . What are you waiting for? Drop off your copy today!

The Toronto Worldwide Short Film Festival, founded by Brenda Sherwood in 1994, has been acquired by the Canadian Film Centre and launched for the 2001 season under a new moniker, the Canadian Film Centre's Worldwide Short Film Festival. The festival will be run as an independent arm of the Centre under Festival Director Shane Smith, formerly programmer at the Inside Out Festival of Lesbian and Gay Film and Video.

Under the auspices of the CFC, the festival is poised to grow. It already has major backing from Sun Life Financial, which is providing a \$25,000 prize for Best Canadian Short, and is planning an on-line digital short film festival in 2002. See below for details on submitting to the festival.

Funding & grant deadlines:

ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL -

416-961-1660
<http://www.arts.on.ca>
Artists' Film & Video: April 1, 2001
Visual Arts Project Grants: Jan. 25

CANADA COUNCIL -

1-800-263-5588 ex.5060
<http://www.canadacouncil.ca>
Grants to Film and Video Artists
(assuming a rotation of last year's dates, please check with the council for correct dates!)

Creative Development Grants

1 April 2001

Production Grants

1 April, 1 November 2001

Grants to New Media and Audio Artists

Creative Development Grants

1 November 2001

Production Grants

1 November 2001

New Media Residencies

1 November 2001

Travel Grants to Media Artists:

Any time

Aboriginal Media Arts Program (Pilot) -

Check with the Council for dates.

TORONTO ARTS COUNCIL -

416-392-6802 ex.208
<http://www.torontoartscouncil.org>

Grants to Visual Artists:

September 17

Grants to Media Artists:

November 20

CANADIAN INDEPENDENT FILM AND VIDEO FUND -

1-888-386-5555
<http://www.cifvf.ca>

Canadian Independent Film & Video Fund:
March 8, September 21, 2001

TELEFILM -

<http://www.telefilm.gc.ca>
Feature Film Fund
Various Deadlines

HAROLD GREENBERG FUND -

<http://www.tmn.ca> (go to corporate info)
Quarterly deadlines.

INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION FUND -

<http://www.ipf.ca>
April 15, 2001

BELL BROADCAST AND NEW MEDIA FUND -

<http://www.bell.ca/fund>, bellfund@ipf.ca
May 1, 2001, June 1

NEW MEMBERS:

**NEW MEMBERS SINCE
JANUARY 2001:**

MICHAEL ALBERSTAT
ALAN BACCHUS
MATTHEW BENNETT
LESLIE CHARLTON
DESH FERNANDO
CELINE GILBERT
GAYLENE GOULD
MAGNUS HJERPE
JENNIFER HOBBS
JEFF HOUSLANDER
APRIL HUBERT
PINA ITALIA
RICK JOHNSTON
VASSILIOS KATSOUPAS
JENNIFER KENNEDY
CORY KINNEY
ROB LANGRIDGE
JASON LAPEYRE
DOUGLAS LENNON
CLAIRE MAJOR
THOMAS JOHN MARZEC
KALLI PAAKSPUU
FRANCA PANETTA
SAM PANTORAS
ROB PIVATO
CHRISSE POULOS
JR POWELL
MYRA RADOS
RICHARD RUSSELL
ALISON TAYLOR
SRDJAN VILOTIJEVIC
SIJUPATHAM VISHNU
STEPHANIE VITTA
KASIA ZENIUK

WHO/WHAT JANUARY 2001

The regular Who/What column has been supplanted by the Storyboard this issue, but a couple of bits of information have come our way:

CONGRATULATIONS:

Congratulations to the following LIFT members nominated for Genie awards:

Laurie Colbert and Dominique Cardona, nominated for Best Live Action Short Drama for *Below the Belt*.

Marlene Rodgers (producer) for *Foxy Lady, Wild Cherry*, also nominated in the category of Best Live Action Short Drama.

Congratulations to Paul Lee who continues to win awards for his short *The Offering*. The most recent: Best Short Film, 2nd Ajjic International Film Festival; Silver Diana Award (Best Director), 12th Golden Diana International Film Festival; Honorable Mention, 1st Voladero International Film Festival.

OTHER NEWS:

Igor Rados is in pre-production on *The Black Widow Brothers*, a one-hour drama adapted from the award-winning play of the same name.

Roy Mitchell, best known as the LIFT Newsletter Committee chair but also a filmmaker and programmer, was put in the spotlight for a solo show of his work mounted by Pleasure Dome. Those in attendance at the December soirée at Cinecycle were treated to hot apple cider, prizes, an audience participation quiz and a live performance.



PHOTO CREDIT, L-R:
On the set of *Delivering Santiago*
(a 35mm short drama): Mannix
Kennedy, 1st AC; Louie Mercier
(LIFT), lead actor & co-producer;
Tory Falkenberg, writer, co-producer
& director; Gerry Mendoza
(LIFT), DP; Jeremy Lloyd, Best
Boy.

LIFT ORIENTATION:

LIFT's orientation sessions are for individuals who are thinking about joining LIFT and members who haven't familiarized themselves with the co-op's facilities and resources. The Office Co-ordinator will go over membership structure and policy, and answer any questions new members may have about the co-op. Equipment rental procedures and policies will also be discussed. Participants will also go on a short tour of the LIFT office and facilities. The orientation is a great place to gain more information about LIFT! Orientations are on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 11:30 am. Call the office @ 416.588.6444 for more information.

EQUIPMENT NEWS:

New Stuff at LIFT

100 WATT STIK-UP LIGHT

We received this light awhile ago when we bought the 420 & 100w peppers. Roberto made some minor wiring repairs and the light is as good as new. This versatile small light fixture can be connected to anything with a small clamp or clothes pin and takes a 100 watt bulb. The STIK-UP light rents for \$3/day for full members and \$6/day for associates.

55MM LENS FOR THE OXBERRY ANIMATION CAMERA

We have repaired this lens (which was donated to us with the 16mm animation camera in December) and dedicated it to the animation room. This lens includes a focus plate which allows the camera to zoom up and down and maintain focus. This lens is ideal for animating small items and /or zooming in on a small frame.

PENTAX SPOT METER

Many thanks to Brigitta Schmidt who included an old but accurate Pentax Spot Meter with a donation of traditional editing equipment. The spot meter allows the user to precisely measure 1' of light within your frame. The Spotmeter rents for \$5/day for full members and \$10/day for associates.

THE ECLAIR NPR (some unique features)

In the last newsletter, we mistakenly reported that the recently repaired Eclair NPR could shoot from 20 to 40 frames per second. In fact, the NPR can now be programmed to shoot from 1 to 40 fps. This allows for some extraordinary visual effects. For example, when programmed at 1 fps, the NPR shutter remains open for a full second as opposed to 1/48th of a second on traditional stop motion cameras. Visually, this results in a stream of blurry motion for anything that moves in the frame, while anything stationary remains sharp and in focus. Very cool!

We have also conducted a successful video to film transfer with the NPR. When set a 29.97 fps and with the shutter at 180 degrees, the NPR can shoot off a video monitor without capturing the video roll bar. The quality is very

good and the precise speed of the motor ensures that any synch dialogue in the video will retain synch on the film. If you would like more details about film stocks and exposure used for the video to film transfer ask Roberto. The Éclair NPR rents for \$33/day for full members and \$60/day for associates.

WORKSHOP COMMITTEE MEETING

Next meetings: March 15, April 19

The workshop committee is looking for new members to help design the spring and summer workshops hosted by LIFT. Committee members receive 20 volunteer hours for participating in this endeavor. If you are interested in joining the committee or want more information, call Roberto at 588-6444. If you have any interesting ideas or suggestions for any kind of workshop, let us know by email at rariganello@hotmail.com

WINTER 2001 WORKSHOPS

There are some spaces still available in the Winter 2001 workshops. They include:

Everything You Wanted To Know About Film (But Were Afraid To Ask!)

Tues. Feb.27 & Thurs. March 1 7 to 10 p.m. (new date!)

Intermediate Writer's Lab

Sat.Feb17 & Sun March 18 10 to 6 p.m.

Intro to Canadian Experimental Film

Sat. March 3, Sun. March 4, Sat. March 10, Sun March 11 Noon to 4p.m.

Making a 30 second Movie on the Oxberry Camera

Sun. March 18, Sat. March 24, Sun. March 25 10 to 6 p.m.

Intro to Acting for Film

Tues. March 20, Thurs. March 22 Tues. March 27 Thurs. March 29 6 to 10 p.m.

Intermediate Cinematography with the Aaton XTR super 16/16mm Camera

Sat. April 7 & Sun April 8 10 to 6 p.m.
For more details call the LIFT office or check out our web site at: lift.on.ca

NEXT EQUIPMENT RESOURCE MEETING – April 10, 6:00 p.m.

Members are strongly encouraged to participate in the decision-making process concerning

LIFT's equipment acquisitions and facilities upgrades. The Equipment resource meetings directly affect the direction that LIFT will take in the coming years. All members are welcome to express their views. The meeting will take place in the LIFT office at 6:00 p.m. For those of you unable to attend, please put your suggestions in writing, and send them to Roberto by e-mail (rariganello@hotmail) or by fax (416)588-7017. This way they can be presented to the group and discussed. Volunteer hours will be given for the time spent at the meeting.

LOWER MEDIA 100 RENTAL RATES!

In an effort to make the digital realm affordable to all, LIFT has lowered the hourly rental rates to the Pink and Azure Media 100 suites \$10/Hr. and \$7/Hr. (from midnight to 8:00am) for Full Members, \$20/Hr. and \$14/Hr. (from midnight to 8:00am) for Associate Members.

NEW MEDIA 100 MANUAL

The LIFT Manual for the new version of Media 100 (v. 7.0) is now complete. There are a few changes to some of the display features but the basic workings are still pretty similar and there shouldn't be any problems adjusting to the newer version. The new LIFT Manuals in addition to the Media 100 User Guides are kept in the edit suites and are available from the LIFT Staff.

HARD DRIVE RENTAL FEE FOR PROTOOLS

Up until this year LIFT hasn't had the Hard Drive Space or the inclination to charge for storage space in conjunction with the Protocols Editing Suite. With the additional space that is now available on the system it seems to be time to carry our Drive Space Policy over to the Protocols System. So, starting in January 2001, \$1/Gig/Day, will be charged for everything over 1Gig/Active Project, stored on the Protocols system.

STORYBOARD

This year's storyboard compiles information from our database on over 100 films that have been completed by LIFT members within the past year. While far from comprehensive, it gives a good overview of what LIFT filmmakers have been up to. As usual, they've been busy! Maybe you'll be inspired to finally start or complete that film that's been on the backburner.

Sarah Abbott

RUG, 18 minutes, DV
An erotic poem. A video camera is accidentally left on during a thunderstorm.

Maria Abbruzzese

RELATIVE MOTION, 3 minutes, Experimental, 16mm

The film *Relative Motion* is a series of designs scratched on already processed film, allowing the natural colour of the film to reveal itself enhanced with paint. The designs are expressions of emotions and thoughts brought to a roar with sound created to accompany the movements of the scratches.

Maria Abbruzzese

PASSENGER, Experimental

The film *Passenger* is a visual interrupted journey exploring layers of subway train images which have been altered and abstracted by scratching text and painting frames. The film's soundtrack reflects the chain of thought in one's mind and the displacement, numbness, anger, tolerance, peace, memories and feelings which can be encountered on the train.

Katharine Asals

KITCHEN APOCALYPSE, 8 minutes, DV

Darryl Augustine

WETLANDS, 5:30 minutes, Experimental, 16mm

An experimental nature documentary.

Sarah Bachinski

PASTORAL, 20 minutes, Narrative, Super 16

Inspired by a Guy De Maupassant short story, *Pastoral* starts with a steam train journey through the countryside. An unexpected stopover allows the subtle relationships between the passengers aboard to develop. Slow and lyrical, the film explores the simple poetry of everyday life – a hungry man, a sleeping child, a nursing mother – all commonplace, all unique. The film culminates in an unusually intimate yet natural exchange between two strangers sitting opposite one another.

Juan Balmaceda

THE SHAMAN WOMAN, 10 minutes, 16mm

The *Shaman Woman* is a dance performance video. It explores the power of ritualistic healing done by ancient and modern Mexican shaman, in this case, a woman.

Ray Baun

ROGERS ACE OF SPADES, 10 minutes, Noir, 16mm

Rogers Ace of Spades is a student film about a man's gambling problem and its effects in an underground casino.

Kara Blake

TYPE O, 5 minutes, 16mm

Type O explores the metaphorical comparison between blood and words in a world where fantasy and reality overlap. Looking inside oneself can unlock a world of inspiration.



Kara Blake, *Type O*

Isagani (Gil) Blas

WE ARE WHO WE ARE, 10 minutes, Narrative, 16mm

A police woman tries to persuade her priest brother to turn their father in for sexually abusing their youngest sister, only to find out she has to confront the greatest challenge of her life.

Michael Bonini

BLACK CAT - (SOUND RECORDIST), 90 minutes, Drama

Four separate stories with a black cat theme. The first film involves a man having premonitions of his daughter's suicide. The second story involves a young girl in a coma after an accident. Her mind acts like she is still alive and she discovers what has happened.

Deanna Bowen

DEUTSCHLAND, 16:35 minutes, Experimental, 16mm, Regular 8

Shannon Brownlee

YONDER'S THE SEA, 5 minutes, Mockumentary, Super 8

Stan Roger's ballad "Maid on the Shore" is the story of a woman who is kidnapped and raped by sailors, and escapes using the Captain's "broadsword instead of an oar." It is also a castration myth. This film attempts to break apart both levels of the song's narrative, using images of a lone woman in bleak landscapes.

Giulio Buttino

REVERIE AND BACCHANAL, 2:15 minutes

Giulio Buttino

VINTAGE CLOTHING, 3:15 minutes

Dominique Cardona

BELOW THE BELT, 13 minutes, Documentary, 35mm

2 girls fall in love. . . Nominated for a 2000 Genie award.

Thomas Chappel

TRANSITION, 2 minutes, Video

Through the sculpture of light and sound, Transition represents the unknown travels between the eye, ears and brain.

Kevin Cherry

THE PROPERTY OF TIME, 5 minutes, Experimental, Super 8

THE SEEDS, 25 minutes, Drama, 16mm

The story of a selfish old man and the young girl who he grows to love from a jar of mysterious seeds.

Chris Chong

MUSIC MIGHT HAVE DECEIVED US, 6 minutes, Experimental, 16mm

LIFT



Daniel Cockburn, *Rocket Man*

Daniel Cockburn

ROCKET MAN, 5 minutes, Video
A karaoke video created for Toronto's Art Karaoke Project, curated by Michelle Kasprzak and Scott McGovern. It takes the lyrics and sentiment of the Elton John/Bernie Taupin pop classic at face value... and then puts a different face on them.

Anthony Cristiano

IL MIO UMORE, 2 minutes, Experimental, 16mm
The stormy mood of the protagonist is peacefully portrayed through paintings and the singing of a poem "il mio umore."

Steve Davidchuk

THE PUPPET SHOW, 10 minutes, Drama, Other - DVC Pro
An actor gets lost in a television studio as the lines between "the show" and reality merge. Think "The Gary Shandling Show" meets "The Truman Show."

Maria Johannah De Groot

10 BEST STUDENT WORKS, 16mm

Nick De Pencier

THE UNCLES, 94 minutes, Drama, Other - Dv
A family drama set in Little Italy.

Alberto Diamante

LOVE SOLDIERS, 25 minutes, Digital Beta
Before killing himself, Alex, a petulant, self-abnegating nihilist, wants to save his

best friend, Louis from an even worse fate - marriage.

Nathaniel Fedorchuk

LET'S GET AT IT, Comedy, 16mm
One day an older man approaches his good friend saying he wants to die. His friend encourages him and wants to help kill him. They explore different ways to die, but each one is rejected by the suicidal man.

Nathan Fleet

MARSHMALLOW, 6 minutes, Super 8
A four year old girl plays alone in a park. A man watches her from the rear view mirror in his car. A jogger follows an eerie hunch to search an abandoned rail station. . . and then all is silent.



Nathan Fleet, *Marshmallow*

Joe Gallo

DAY PASS, 4 minutes, Experimental/Drama, Super 8
A man wanders the city and an apartment building in search of his long lost friend - himself.

Celine Gilbert

SURRENDER, 26 minutes, Drama, 35mm
Filmed in Zazibar, *Surrender* is the story of two young Muslim men who have strong feelings towards each other, and the conflict that arises when one is forced by his father to marry.

Celine Gilbert

THE GUNFIGHT, 4 minutes, Experimental, Other

The Gunfight is an adaptation of Shakespeare's sonnet "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?" Shot as a western, *The Gunfight* pays homage to the hero, the western, and love.

Camille Harrison

BEHIND THE VELVET CURTAIN, 46 minutes, Documentary, Digital Beta
A behind-the-scenes glimpse at the world of ballet.

Nigel Hartwell

BLOOD BATH, 10 minutes, 16mm
Love, revenge and infidelity lead Rachele through a complex maze of delirium. A puzzle with pieces that don't quite fit together form a picture which ultimately becomes a blood bath.

Lisa Hayes

LEZ BE FRIENDS, 13 minutes, Comedy/Drama, 35mm
What happens when your best friend comes out, and you make a film about it? After making a short film about her best friend Abbey's struggle to accept her sexual orientation, Lily is assumed to be the true subject of the film. While Abbey, the film's star, becomes a legend in the Lesbian community, Abbey is trapped in a netherworld between heterosexuality and homosexuality, continually trying to set the record straight.

David N. Hayman

TORONTO...SEE FOR YOURSELF, 17 minutes, Experimental/Documentary, 16mm
Who taught you about the world you live in?

Ant Horasanli

REDLINE, 57 minutes, Docudrama, Other
A look into the world of street racers - the risks and dangers, and the evolution of love for the automobile.

STORYBOARD Cont.

Philip Hoffman

OPENING SERIES 4, 7 minutes

Nigel Hunt

A LA CLAIRE FONTAINE, 3 minutes, Music Video, Super 16

A Bravofact funded classical music video which is a dramatic interpretation of a traditional French-Canadian song sung by Musica Intima.

Samy Inayah

BROKE BODY SAINTS, 20 minutes, Drama/Narrative, 16mm

Malcolm Sheppard and Dino Pierce are best friends whose bond and love for each other is thrown into question after both become victims of physical abuse. *Broke Body Saints* is a meditation on family, friendship, violence and the loss of innocence.

Melanie Jeffrey

MISSED, 11 minutes, Experimental, 16mm, Super 8

An experimental process documentary which chronicles a friend's suicide, and the emotional consequences of missing his funeral.



Melanie Jeffrey, *Missed*

Rose Kallal

FLOW, 6 minutes, 16mm

A film about mutability and the notion of time and space as illusion. A spatial musical soundtrack and close-up shots of red rushing water guide the viewer through the fragile reality of the characters.

Manny Kargov

GONE ASTRAY, Betacam SP

Jane Kim

WIDE-EYED, 9 minutes, Narrative, 16mm
A 16-year old Korean Canadian girl is concerned about the way she looks. In an awkward attempt to meet the ideal Western standards of beauty, she obsesses about double eyelid surgery and taunts her young tomboy sister.

Gloria Kim

PARTIAL SELVES, 9:20 minutes

Cory Kinney

THE CHAIR, 12 minutes, Drama, Super 16
A serial killer discovers that the trials we face in life are not as important as the ones we face in death.

Isabelle Kluge-Sclavi

THE MIRROR GARDEN, 24 minutes, Drama, 16mm

The symbolic tale of the loss of innocence of a child, as she grows in the knowledge of good and evil with the demise of her parents' marriage.

Adam Knickle

FAR, 35 minutes, Experimental, Betacam SP

Gender struggles for equality, a journey through the frustrations of differences.

Mark Kowalsky

DEAR LIFE (CHANTAL KREVIUZUK), 3:45 minutes, Music Video, 35mm

A Medieval caravan pulls up in city square, the door opening to reveal Chantal and a band of circus performers (acrobats, dancers, firebreathers etc).

Jason Lapeyre

A RED PEPPER TWIST, 10 minutes, Animation, Super 8

A chess-playing seal must play Death itself in the ultimate match.

Robert Lazar

WITHERLAND, 35 minutes, Drama, 16mm

A beautiful creature of imagination journeys to find the supreme voice in a land of lost and twisted nursery rhymes.

Helen Lee

SUBROSA, 22 minutes, Narrative, DV, 35mm

Subrosa traces a young woman's journey to Korea, the land of her birth, to find the mother she's never known.

Ben Lichty

ROUTE 55, 5 minutes, Narrative, Super 8
A paperboy delivers bundles of fifty dollar bills in hopes of bringing cheer to some people, but instead his gifts bring nothing but trouble.



Helen Lee, *Subrosa*

Regan Macaulay

WATCHING MR. BODY, 20 minutes, Experimental, Other

A story about a dead body, the reaction he receives, and the man who fears him the most.

Chris Maclean

IN MEMORY OF LIGEIA, 32 minutes, Drama, 16mm /Hi 8

Sara Maclean

ORDER, 3 minutes, Experimental, 16mm

Mario Marquez

ACOMODANTE, 8 minutes, Experimental, 16mm

Evil goes around in the city.

Mario Marquez

TRILLIZOS SE DEVORAN ENTRES, 4 minutes, Narrative, 16mm

Three brothers kill each other in a mysterious way.

Penny McCann

MARSHLANDS, 6 minutes, Experimental, 16mm, Super 8

A psychic's prediction of impending disaster underlies this experimental meditation set on the marshes of Sackville, New Brunswick.

Hilkka McCallum

HINDSIGHT, Drama, 35mm

Two people on a park bench get to know (and hate) each other.

Claire McFarlen

IRM 2000, 45 minutes, Mockumentary, Other (DV)

A corporate video, both documentary and narrative.

Wrik Mead

CAMP, 12 minutes, 16mm, Super 8 & DV
Camp is based on the stories of homosexual survivors of the WWII concentration

camps. A series of short, expressionistic vignettes weave together to tell of their horrific experiences. Part documentary, part drama.

Allyson Mitchell & Lex Vaughn

HAIR PIE, 4 minutes, Animated, Super 8
Two cowboys duke it out at a country fair bake-off.

Cameron Moffat

ANOTHER DAY..., 12 minutes,
Experimental, Super 8
Imagine you made one crucially wrong decision – where would you be now? A day in the life of a business guy versus a homeless person (both are me).

Ruba Nadda

I ALWAYS COME TO YOU, 128 minutes,
Drama, 16mm
A young girl spends three days looking for her sister.

Kylee Nixon

KEVIN, 55 minutes, Documentary, Other
A documentary about a young gay man who has recently moved from Hinton Alberta to Edmonton.

Kylee Nixon

5 PEOPLE, 7 minutes, Experimental, Other (DVC-Pro)
A short piece with: a girl and her swimming experiences, a guy talking about his dreams, close-ups of parts of the face, and another guy making faces and showing some of the neat stuff he carries around in his bag.

Midi Onodera

THE BASEMENT GIRL, 11:40 minutes,
Experimental, 16mm

Conall Pendergast

FLESH FREAKS, 80 minutes, Narrative,
Digital Beta
A Central American brain-eating parasite makes its way to downtown Toronto for a little fun and games.

Brad Peyton

GOD SPEED, 5 minutes, Experimental

Mohamed Ragheb

ROCK & ROLL BREAKDOWN, 25 minutes,
Noir, Other
A teenager sets up his own parents' house for robbery by two members of a local rock band he admires, with disastrous consequences.

INCUBUS, 5 minutes, Experimental,
16mm

A young boy is haunted by a drawing which comes to life.

Michale Raske

BASKETBALL DIARY, 12:52 minutes,
Drama, Betacam SP
A teenage girl stops at nothing to get on her high school basketball team.

Malcolm Rogge

SCAR(E), 7 minutes, Docudrama, Super 8
A woman who has just had an operation on her abdomen gets to know her new scar.

Davetta Samuels

THE HYPE, 10 minutes, Mockumentary,
VHS Video, Digital Beta
A documentary on the thoughts of the general public about the year 2000.

Zsolt Sandor

FEAR, 16 minutes, Experimental/Drama,
16mm
A young man transcends his fear, upstairs in a bookshop inside a sarcophagus.

Steve Sanguedolce

SMACK, 55 minutes, Experimental, 16mm
Part documentary, part fiction, *Smack* follows the story of three brothers aged five to seven as they try to find their way in the world. Combining elements of Super 8 diary work, documentary and drama, the stories are told by actual subjects talking about their own lives, and range in scope from religious transformations to heroin overdoses.

Steve Sanguedolce

TOO HOT TO HANDLE, 10 minutes,
Experimental, 16mm
Telephone sex ads in a song.

Vanda Schmoekel

COLLISION, 13 minutes, Narrative, 16mm
A melodrama about one woman's capacity to make herself miserable.

Elida Schogt

THE WALNUT TREE, 11 minutes,
Experimental Documentary, 16mm
When they fled in 1943, they tore several pictures out of the family album. The story of missing photographs told with those that remain.

Cameron Sheppard

BABY, 6:30 minutes, Drama, 16mm
Based on a short story by Susan Sontag. A couple talks to a psychiatrist about their child.

Justin Snaitth

MEMORIES, 7 minutes, Drama, 16mm
A ghost story.

Stefan Steen

THE SHOWDOWN, 8:32 minutes

Jeff Sterne

SCRAMBLED PORN, 10 mm,
Experimental/Documentary, 16mm
Our electronic age getting a little too close.

Jason Suedath

MY DREAMS OF HER ARE BEAUTIFUL, 8 minutes, 16mm
A naive director attempts a film about recapturing his first love, in the style of his favourite childhood television show, *Miami Vice*. He casts himself in the lead and sets the stage for meeting his lost sweetheart, whom he has not seen in ten years.

Kristiina Szabo

DRAGONFLY, 10 minutes, 16mm
A fusion of visceral image and sound that interweaves an ancient fairy tale with the story of one woman's emotional journey following the loss of a loved one. These two tales become one in a collage of narration, live action, still photography, a narration, and an original drum n' bass score.



Kristiina Szabo, *Dragonfly*

Siu Ta

URGE, Comedy
A comedic look at a young woman's attempt to impress others at a party while trying to hold in her need to pee. Finally unable to hold it in any longer, she takes drastic measures – with unexpected results.

STORYBOARD CONT.

Aaron Tearne

EL GENERALE, 13 minutes, Narrative, Other
A parody/tribute to *The General* starring Buster Keaton.

Michael Thomas

CLOSED DOORS, 15 minutes, Drama, 16mm
A writer is writing a story about a group of friends at a house party. The host and hostess are brother and sister and are having an affair. The sister's boyfriend is the brother's best friend and joins them later.

Ian Thompson

THREE LIVES OF KATE, 18 minutes, Drama, 35mm
A dramatic short, the film focuses on the character Kate coming to terms with a psychiatric condition called obsessive compulsive disorder during three periods of her life.

Kimberly Thorpe

TRAILERVISION: THE MOVIE, 96 minutes, Comedy,
See trailerVISION.com

Chris Trebilcock

SQUIRREL BAIT, 10 minutes, Comedy, Other
Two therapists take away their patient's identity through medication.

Matthew Vallee

13' DIARY, 120 minutes, Experimental/Documentary, VHS Video

P. Marco Veltri

REMEMBER, 45 minutes, Super 16

Srdjan Vilotijevic

FULL FRONTAL, 23 minutes, Drama, Super 16

Benjamin Vlietstra

BLIND, 7 minutes, Documentary, 16mm, Super 8
A woman shares her experience coping with the blight of fibromyalgia.

N. Jane Walker

GOOD MONDAY, 20:33, Black Comedy, Digital Beta
Max finds a lucky penny and has the best day of his life - until he gets a bit too cocky.

Valerie Weiss

TIMEPIECE, 55 minutes, Experimental/Documentary, 16mm, Betacam SP, Super 8
Timepiece is a film about inheritance. But what begins as a story about a watch that the filmmaker inherits becomes a film about the more elusive and intangible things one can inherit from family. As the filmmaker explores her unique relationship with her mother, we hear not only a penetrating account of how her mother and grandparents survived the Holocaust in Budapest, Hungary, but also the gradual realization of how this experience continues to have an impact on the filmmaker's life today.

Tony West

KNOBS, 3 minutes, Noir, Super 8
A young girl makes her way through a Victorian mansion late at night to the bedroom of her intended victim, who she plans to murder with a pair of scissors.

Tony West

BAD HABITS, 10 minutes, Narrative, Super 8
A short story about a young man with many bad habits, who one day decides to purge himself of these vices in order to gain special powers.

Kevin C.W. Wong

RECLUSE, 5 minutes, Experimental, 16mm
A journey into the mind of a frustrated writer.

Kevin C.W. Wong

ON TIME, 5 minutes, Narrative, 16mm
An exploration of two people's point of view on the concept of time.

Christina Zeidler

TRACES, 10 minutes, Experimental, 16mm
A smudge, a physical stain we leave behind as we travel through our everyday lives. Mixing images fat with colour and worked over by hand, with textured sound and songs so familiar you feel you almost know.

Christina Zeidler

TANTRUM, 2 mins, Narrative, Super 8
An angry asshole rollerblader has a fit for all to see.

Eva Ziemsen

FORTUNE, 9 minutes, DV
A story where fantasy challenges reality as Gulliver, an easily tempted man, crosses paths with a mystic fortune teller.

Eva Ziemsen

MAMA & PAPA, 16 minutes, 16mm
A story of the chance meeting of two people. A succession of key decisions by the characters has a profound effect on the audience's experience. The film explores the twist of fate in all of our lives and asks the viewer to question their own life's fate.



Christina Zeidler, *Traces*.

A GRIEF HISTORY OF LIFT

In its early days many Toronto filmmakers passed through LIFT who have managed to sustain and develop their filmmaking practice in the face of tough odds, including Alan Zweig, Janis Lundman, Colin Brunton, Adrienne Mitchell, Peter Mettler, Mark Akbar, and Ron Mann. (And of course, the tales of Bruce McDonald basically living at LIFT are near-legendary.) It's due to the time and dedication of those filmmakers and countless others that LIFT exists today.

It's hard to pin down an exact date for the founding of LIFT, but for the purposes of celebrating an official 20th anniversary 1981 is good enough, when LIFT was officially incorporated as a non-profit organization and had hammered out its constitution and aims and objectives. As a loose organization, it existed for a couple of years before that.

The idea for LIFT was born in the fall of 1979 when Jane Gutteridge (then co-ordinator at the CFMDC) and Bruce Elder (on the CFMDC Board), called a meeting of independent filmmakers interested in forming a co-op, to replace the recently defunct Toronto Filmmakers Co-op. As Jane recalls, it was a natural evolution from the CFMDC, which had become a centre for independent filmmaking in Toronto in the absence of a production co-op (Seth Feldman, Michael Snow, and Jim Murphy were on the Board, and filmmakers like Niv Fichman, David Cronenbourg, and Don Shebib were involved with the Centre).

In the Spring of 1980 the formation of LIFT was announced in the CFMDC Newsletter, and a membership drive was started. LIFT's initial goals were to: 1. support and encourage independent filmmaking; 2. facilitate personal contact and exchange of ideas among filmmakers; 3. organize screenings and workshops for members. The first year was spent organizing meetings, screenings and workshops and working out the nitty gritty of membership, aims and objectives and a constitution

– a not-so-easy task which meant a lot of meetings. In 1981 LIFT was incorporated and decided to extend its services to become a production-oriented co-op.

LIFT operated out of the CFMDC offices at 144 Front St. W. until August 1983, when it moved into its' own 300 sq. ft. space at 101 Niagara St. The co-op was able to offer production and post-production equipment to members who worked 20 hours per month to aid in the administrative operations. Everything was done on a volunteer basis, and seven committees were set up to address issues of membership, administration, funding, space, workshops, production and equipment.

In these first few years the going was tough – LIFT was having a hard time getting stable funding, and original members were burning out and leaving. Janis Lundman, one of the stalwarts, wrote of that time in the March 1989 LIFT Newsletter: "As the money dwindled and the workload necessary to keep the co-op going increased, LIFT floundered. We continued to have meetings, screenings, and workshops but constantly faced having to rely on organizing everything with members' volunteer hours. There were constant stops and starts with LIFT being reborn a number of times during that space of time. But thanks to the constant work of its members, it refused to die."

In 1984 LIFT received increased funding from the NFB and a part-time co-ordinator was hired, and in 1984 LIFT moved into a larger space at 345 Adelaide St. W. (Suite 501) with money from its first core funding grant from the Canada Council. Government funding also began to come through from the TAC and OAC. In 1985 the co-op moved to a larger space down the hall (Suite 505), the first newsletter was issued in April, and volunteer service to LIFT, while still mandatory, became 20 hours annually instead of monthly (think

about that the next time you're tempted to complain about your volunteer hours!).

1986 was a turning point – the staff, board and members were once again facing burnout, and LIFT was heading into a slump. Stable funding and full-time staff were desperately needed. The co-op was saved when it received funding from the Federal Job Development fund and was able to hire a full-time Co-ordinator and two other full-time staff. By 1987 the Newsletter was established as bi-monthly, regular workshops were held, member screenings were monthly, and the membership reached 162.

LIFT remained at 345 Adelaide St. W. until 1995, with resources and membership steadily increasing. After much work on the part of the board and staff researching sites, it moved to its current location at 37 Hanna. The new location offers many advantages, including air conditioning and 3100 sq. ft. of space (read Greg Woodbury's reminiscences on the 345 Adelaide St. office to truly appreciate those benefits!).

In the six years since, the number of equipment accessing members has tripled. Now in 2001, with membership over 600, LIFT remains true to its original goals. Members contribute volunteer hours to the co-op; members' screenings and artist talks are held throughout the year; the Newsletter is issued bi-monthly and is supplemented by information mailings and emails; production support and workshops continue, and committees remain an important part of the infrastructure. Most importantly, LIFT has maintained its commitment to independent filmmaking and its policy of access and affordability to ensure that artists are able to produce their films in a nurturing, creative, and supportive environment.

- Larissa Fan, with files from Barb Sniderman and the LIFT 10th Anniversary Newsletter (March 1989).

Living at LIFT

Bruce McDonald

interviewed by Gary Popovich, March 11, 1989

WITH JIM MORRISON GROWLING OUT "LA WOMAN" IN THE BACKGROUND, McDONALD AND I DISCUSSED THE BEGINNINGS OF LIFT FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF AN EARLY MEMBER, SOMEONE WHO JUST WANTED TO MAKE FILMS AND WONDERED IN BECAUSE HE HAD NOWHERE BETTER TO GO.

Bruce McDonald: I LEFT SCHOOL; I WANTED TO MAKE FILMS. I FOUND LIFT, WENT TO A MEETING AND I WAS BORED IMMEDIATELY. I THOUGHT, "WHAT KIND OF BOZO OPERATION HAVE I GOTTEN MYSELF INTO?" BUT THERE WAS A LITTLE POTENTIAL THERE THAT I SAW, AND WE JUST WORKED HARD AND TRIED TO KEEP THE MEETINGS DOWN TO A MINIMUM, AND PHONED UP THE PONDEROSA, SIGNED THE PAPERS, AND HERE WE ARE. PEOPLE HAVE COME AND GONE, SOME PEOPLE ARE STILL HERE, SOME PEOPLE ARE BANK TELLERS NOW.

Gary Popovich: WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST MEETING LIKE?

BM: NOBODY KNEW WHAT WAS GOING ON; NOBODY HAD EVEN MADE A FILM, AND WE SPENT MOST OF THE TIME TALKING ABOUT WHO SHOULD TALK FIRST. IT TOOK ABOUT SIX MEETINGS TO FIGURE OUT WHO SHOULD TALK FIRST, AND THEN ONCE WE FIGURED OUT WHO SHOULD TALK FIRST...

GP: ... YOU HAD TO FIGURE OUT WHO WAS GOING TO TALK SECOND.

BM: YEAH. IT TOOK ANOTHER SIX MEETINGS TO FIGURE OUT WHO WAS GOING TO TALK SECOND. BUT ALL THE TIME WAS WORTH IT, 'CAUSE LOOK AT LIFT NOW...

GP: WHERE DID YOU LIVE?

BM: I LIVED AT LIFT, WHEN IT WAS ON NINGRAM STREET... THERE WASN'T EVEN A COUCH, I HAD A SLEEPING BAG. SO I HAD A VESTED INTEREST IN LIFT 'CAUSE IT GAVE ME SHELTER FROM THE STORM. THAT'S WHY I HELPED OUT.

GP: A LITTLE PHOTO OF BOB ON THE WALL?

BM: YUP. LISTEN TO A LITTLE COLTRANE, SMOKE A LITTLE BOO.

GP: TELL ME ABOUT THE FILMS YOU MADE AT LIFT.

BM: WELL, I COULDN'T HAVE MADE KNOCK/KNOCK/WITHOUT LIFT. GOT FOOTAGE FROM THEM, GOT EDITING TIME. LOTS OF TEN, STOLE A FEW COOKIES.

GP: DIDN'T YOU RUN THE ORGANIZATION FOR A WHILE?

BM: YEAH, FOR A LITTLE WHILE. KEPT IT IN



A VERY CRITICAL MOMENT, IN A VERY CRITICAL TIME WHEN EVERYBODY HAD ABANDONED SHIP. COLIN BRUNTON AND MYSELF MANAGED TO KEEP IT ALIVE FOR A FEW MONTHS UNTIL THE WONDERFUL AND TALENTED ALEXANDRA RAFFE STEPPED IN... IT WAS THE FIRST TIME LIFT GOT THEIR SHIT TOGETHER. ALEX RAFFE GOT IT ON THE BOARDS, 'CAUSE BEFORE THAT IT WAS JUST A BUNCH OF CRAZY MEETINGS AND NOBODY KNEW WHAT WAS GOING ON. ALEX BROUGHT THE BUSINESS SIDE TO LIFT.

GP: WHAT DID YOU BRING TO IT DURING YOUR ADMINISTRATION?

BM: ME? JUST A LITTLE ROSY GLOW, I GUESS. YOU KNOW, I TRIED TO GET A LOT OF PEOPLE INTO LIFT SOME OF THE FRINGE DWELLERS THAT I KNOW THAT ARE NOW THRIVING MEMBERS OF LIFT. AND PROBABLY WITHOUT LIFT THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN LOST LITTLE SHEEP IN THE WILDERNESS OF FILM.

GP: IS THAT THE PROGRESSION THEN: LOST LITTLE SHEEP TO OUTLAW'S A SORE OF MYSTICAL CONVERSION FROM INNOCENCE, BLOOD, AND SWEAT TO OUTLAW HEROES, MARTYRS OF THE MARGINS?

BM: (WELL) IT'S FUNNY HOW YOU BECOME MORE RESPECTABLE. THEY WON'T TELL YOU WHAT THEY WERE LIKE THEN...

GP: YOU TOOK SOME TRIPS REPRESENTING LIFT ACROSS THE COUNTRY. TELL ME ABOUT SOME OF THOSE DUSTY TRAVELS DURING YOUR ADMINISTRATION.

BM: COLIN BRUNTON AND I DURING OUR TERM IN OFFICE REPRESENTED LIFT AT THE QUEBEC CITY IFFA CONFERENCE INDEPENDENT FILM AND VIDEO ALLIANCE THE ORGANIZATION THAT BRINGS TOGETHER

FILM AND VIDEO ARTIST-RUN CENTRES ACROSS CANADA, SERVING AS A LOBBY ORGANIZATION, INFORMATION GATHERING AND EXCHANGE, ETC.) AND WE MADE A VERY GOOD IMPRESSION BECAUSE IN ONE DRUNKEN NIGHT PAUL POPE OF THE NEW FOUNDLAND FILM CO-OP PUT HIS ARM AROUND US AND SAID, "YOU KNOW, YOU GUYS DON'T LOOK LIKE YOU'RE FROM TORONTO." AND THAT MADE US VERY HAPPY BECAUSE HE DIDN'T THINK WE WERE THE KIND OF PEOPLE THAT HE WOULD HAVE MET FROM TORONTO...

GP: ANY OTHER HIGHLIGHTS FROM YOUR ADMINISTRATION?

BM: OH... I REMEMBER PAINTING THE LIFT OFFICE WHERE IT IS NOW ON 345 ADELIDE ST. WEST. BEFORE LIFT CAME IT WAS PREVIOUSLY LIVED IN BY A GIRL WHO USED TO PERFORM MEXICAN DEATH RITUALS. SHE HAD A DEAD COYOTE IN HER FRIDGE AND A CIRCLE OF FLOWERS AND CANDLES AROUND THE FLOOR. AND EVERYTHING WAS PAINTED BLACK FLOORS, CEILING, FRIDGE, EVERYTHING. WE REALLY GOT A LONG WELL TOGETHER... AFTER A FEW MONTHS OF THE MEXICAN DEATH RITUALS, PERHAPS BECAUSE SHE MADE CONTACT WITH OTHER PEOPLE, SHE PAINTED A YELLOW STRIPE AROUND THE WHOLE PLACE, WHICH WAS A BIG, BIG MOMENT FOR HER IN HER LIFE... AND THEN SHE ENDED UP MOVING OUT, SHAVING HER HEAD, GOING TO MEXICO, BURYING ALL HER POSSESSIONS IN A PIT, SETTING HER DOG ON FIRE, AND BECOMING A BUDDHIST KIND OF PERSON.

GP: WOW, AND OUT OF THOSE PISHES, LIFT AROSE, LIKE THE PHOENIX BIRD.

BM: YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT! SO LIFT NOW RESIDES IN AN ANCIENT MEXICAN DEATH RITUAL PARLOUR. IT'S GIVEN IT SOME VERY MAGICAL POWERS, AND THAT'S WHY IT'S DOING SO WELL TODAY. IT'S GOT THE MOJO RISING... YO!

THIS WASN'T THE HISTORY OF LIFT THAT I FOUND IN THE OLD MINUTES OR THE OLD NEWLETTERS. THE DOORS WERE WINDING THEIR SONG DOWN TO THE END AS WE MADE IT OUT OF McDONALD'S DOOR AND OUT INTO THE STREET. I THANKED BRUCE FOR DISCLOSING A HISTORY THAT WAS ONLY PARTIALLY COVERED OVER BY THE RESPECTABILITY OF WALLPAPER, COUNCIL GRANTS, AND MORE TRIM MEMBERS.

THIS IS AN EDITED VERSION OF THE ORIGINAL INTERVIEW. FOR THE FULL VERSION SEE LIFT NEWLETTER VOL. 3 NO. 2, APRIL 1989

REFLECTIONS ON LIFT: AN INTERVIEW WITH ANNETTE MANGAARD

Vanda Schmockel

Annette Mangaard, the prolific Toronto-based filmmaker and longtime LIFT member, has been making films since the early 80's. Her directing credits include: *A Dialogue With Vision*, *Her Soil Is Gold*, *Let Me Wrap My Arms Around You*, *Northbound Cairo*, *The Iconography Of Venus*, *The Tyranny of Architecture*, and her 1996 feature film *Fish Tale Soup*. She sat down to reflect with us, on the occasion of LIFT's 20th Anniversary.

VANDA

SCHMOCKEL: So, how did you first become involved with LIFT?



photo credit: John Porter

Janis Lundman & Crew 1987:
Janis Lundman shooting *CLOSE YOUR EYES AND THINK OF ENGLAND*
at Queen and Soho, May 9, 1987. L-R: John Dennison, Ian Clifford, Daryl
Beebe, Phil Stoal, Annette Mangaard, Ruth Mandel, Janis Lundman, Michelle
Sirois, Leslie Chambers, Adrienne Mitchell, Katherine Barrie, Kim Derko.

make features back then. Patricia Rozema was a member, and had just made her short film *Passion: A Letter In*

16mm. She was developing *I've Heard The Mermaids Singing* at that point. Bruce McDonald was also a member, as was Bay Weyman (who recently co-directed a documentary about Jane Bunnett in Cuba). At that time, LIFT was basically a one room office with an edit suite in it. There was one dubber in

the office, and not much equipment as I recall.

VSE: How do you find yourself involved with LIFT these days?

AM: Well, basically it's just equipment rentals when I need it. And I'm often asked to do workshops. I've done a lot of directing workshops. I also started, a long time ago, doing something called "How To Make A Movie" where I'd go through the whole process of how to make a film, starting from no knowledge to how to make an answer print. I did that a few times, but it's a lot of work. At the moment I'm teaching a course at OCAD called "Film For Artists."

VSE: Now that you've established yourself as a filmmaker, how does LIFT figure into your work today, if at all?

AM: Well, it does, but only in making a certain kind of film. At the

moment, I'm doing two films that are being funded by arts councils. One is very experimental and is being shot mostly on a Bolex. It includes underwater footage, so I rented the underwater housing for the camera from LIFT. LIFT is a great place to get things like that. I'm also shooting a film about Arnaud Maggs, the artist/photographer, and for that I don't need high-end production equipment or a big crew. The kinds of things that I need are the likes of the animation stand for shooting the reproductions of his work. In the meantime, I'm also in development of a feature which is a \$4,000,000 film, so I won't be using anything from LIFT. It really depends on the kind of film you're making.

Nowadays, a lot of people are shooting their films on DV. If I were to shoot another script that I have with a small DV camera, I would probably get things like the lights and sound equipment from LIFT. It's funny, the equipment thing. I just finished editing something, and learned how to use an AVID at Charles St. Video, not at LIFT, and part of the reason for that is because I felt I needed a lot of technical support. I wanted someone to hold my hand, because I'd never used a non-linear editing system before. There's always someone available to help at Charles St., if you book during the office hours, whereas at LIFT it's much more hands off. I also wanted to expand and get to know some of the artists at other artist run centres more. But I think all the artist run centres need to work together because of what's happening with the technology in film and video. Places like Trinity Square Video, Charles St. Video and LIFT really need to cooperate in order to survive and keep up.

VSE: I find it noteworthy that in other local artist run centres, particularly the ones that deal with video artists, there's a greater sense of the successful artists coming back to their co-ops to continue their work. Whereas, in film, the success of

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photo credit: John Porter

LIFT Ward's Island 1994:
LIFT's annual Ward's Island Screening/BBQ, in the clubhouse. August 13, 1994.

the filmmaker often winds up going beyond the scope of LIFT and the successful artists don't come back as much.

Q: Yeah, it's too bad that they can't [stay] involved in some other way. Because that would be really good for new filmmakers coming in and I also think that, as a filmmaker, there's a point where you kind of feel dislocated from community if you're not involved with something like LIFT. I think that's part of the reason that Charles St. and Trinity have those senior artists coming back, is because they want somewhere they can meet other people like themselves for dialogue. It would be great if LIFT worked that way, but I'm not sure how it can.

Q: How do you think LIFT has changed as it's become bigger?

A: When LIFT was smaller, it definitely felt like a meeting place – a real community. I'm not sure that's there now. But then, that doesn't really exist anywhere anymore. Once you start getting into making films for business, then it becomes a business. It no longer is that thing that it once was. I was on a Canada Council jury once, and we were

assessing artist run centres across the country. All the people from outside of Toronto remarked that LIFT had "a garage mentality – ship them in and ship them out." And I thought, "No that's not true". There is a small core group there that I think is still really vital, even though LIFT now has a bigger membership. There's a group there that's still really producing work and making things happen. Other members might just get the newsletter and aspire to be filmmakers.

Of course, it's so hard to get money now. Everything has changed. The granting system, which I know a lot about, is very different. The question of where you can get money from, and how you can get it, has changed and it's much more difficult. Things like the OFDC being gone makes a big difference. It makes a difference to the way that filmmakers can progress and step up, and it affects the kinds of work they can make. The OFDC made it possible for these filmmakers to make low-budget, independent features and there's nowhere for that now. The councils don't give you quite enough money, unless your budget

is really, really low. [Patricia Rozema's] *Mermaids* would never have been made without the OFDC. John Greyson's early films wouldn't have been made. There are a lot of really good and important films that wouldn't have been made without the OFDC so when that was cut, it made things really difficult.

That's why there's a certain level of filmmaker, and then they either have to get into the industry – into the commercial side of things – or they don't. In order to grow, you want to be able to do bigger, better work, but there is no middle ground right now because of the way the funding is set up. LIFT would be a perfect place for a middle ground, if it could exist – like having people producing \$700,000 - \$800,000 features. Low enough budgets that they could have absolute and complete control and yet still work with professional actors, pay decent fees, pay the crew, etc. without doing something for TV or a MOW.

Annette Mangaard is presently serving as an Associate Officer at the Ontario Arts Council. Her feature film project CAT SCAN is currently in development.

WEIRD AND WONDERFUL TALES FROM A LIFT

TECHNICAL MANAGER

GREG WOODBURY BY TAN MUIK

Greg Woodbury was the technical manager at LIFT from 1989 to 1995. After a little encouragement, he was willing to share a few of the "printable" stories about LIFT when it was still over at 345 Adelaide.

Greg's memory of the old LIFT office is of a 20 by 12 foot room that was home to five staff members, all working facing each other with about two feet between them. "It was a fire hazard," he recalled.

The edit suite, which later became the equipment room, was a fur safe. It had three-foot thick walls, and if you shut the door, "you could suffocate." As far as he remembers, no one did.

One memorable incident took place on a sweltering summer day. Greg opened the door to an editing suite where two women were editing, and found to his surprise that they had taken their tops off.

When Bruce McDonald had an office upstairs above LIFT, around the time of *Road Kill*, Greg remembers arriving at work in the morning and seeing Bruce McDonald groupies lined up, sleeping in front of Bruce's door.

When Greg was working his first week during regular office hours at LIFT, a stranger came into the office. While the coordinator was away from her desk, someone noticed the man throw her purse out the window. Greg ran down the stairs to the street to fetch the purse while the man descended by elevator. The man got the bag, and Greg instinctively reached to grab it away from him, but the man began punching him. The next thing Greg recalls was finding himself lying on the ground with the guy kicking his head. Afterwards, a man

from a neighboring office came down to help him up from the ground. Fortunately Greg did not suffer any broken bones, just a sore neck. After that introduction to LIFT, Greg knew "that this job was for me."

Greg also recalls another LIFT crime story circa 1991. Two LIFT members, Adrian Amato and Cal Ing, were editing when they heard what they thought were fireworks coming from outside. They stuck their heads out of the window and saw a man lying on the ground at the corner of Adelaide and Charlotte, with blood dripping out of his head.

Terrified, they sat in the edit suite and waited. While they waited, they heard someone coming up in the elevator. They looked out of the window and could see the block was surrounded by police and swat teams. They yelled down, "What should we do?" and the police replied "Stay there." As they waited, one of them had to pee, but his friend wouldn't let him go to the washroom, so he ended up peeing in a bottle. In the end they were able to leave the building safely.

Greg's decision to leave LIFT was a difficult one to make, but by 1995 the time was right to move on. He enjoyed his time working at LIFT, finding the work rewarding and a tremendous learning experience. During his time at LIFT, he had contact with "many talented, interesting and exasperating people" and "had access to specialized knowledge and information that would have been difficult to attain elsewhere."

Greg is presently teaching Post Production Audio at the International Academy of Design and works as the technical manager at Charles Street Video.



photo credit: John Porter

LIFT Film Loops '92:
Film Loops exhibit at LIFT,
for ARCT's "Art Crawl", January 17, 1992.
Back row L-R: Herwig Gayer & Irene Turjanski;
Laura & Marty McGough
Front L-R: Robin Eedoo, Greg Woodbury.



ON BOARD WITH LIFT

A long-time member of LIFT, Christy Garland has worked in the film industry for almost a decade. She is a member of the LIFT Board of Directors, and is currently finishing her new film, *Dual Citizen*.



Jason MacDermott: Let's start at the beginning of your film career - you went to film school, correct?

Christy Garland: I went to Ryerson. I studied in a program called "Media Arts," and that prepared me for what filmmaking is now. You had to shoot and edit film, you had to shoot and edit video, photography, computer animation, cell animation. So it was good, because it kind of prepared me for the whole time code thing, which still baffles me to a certain degree. When you end up editing on an Avid, time code plays a pretty large part. I graduated in '92, and to my surprise, all the things I studied back then have come in quite handy. I got to know about time code, I got to know about video editing, and it all sort of plays into non-linear editing. It was a pretty good education.

JM: Did you go right from film school to being a AD?

CG: Yeah, I actually did. An ex-boyfriend of mine was acting in one of Bruce McCulloch's films, so that was my first job. It was a low-budget, short film, and they gave me a job. They had to teach me how to turn a walkie on. So that was my first job, and then I worked for the CBC on "Kids in the Hall," just on the film stuff, for two and a half years. It was great experience, and it was a really fun first-paying gig.

JM: So you were working for the CBC - is that good money?

CG: Not in comparison with the larger film production industry. The CBC is good because you can work there, and you don't have to be a Director's Guild member, so it's a wonderful training ground. Many people stay there because it's different from the rest of the film industry in the way they structure the hours. It's closer to a "straight" job.

JM: How did this lead you into independent film?

CG: I realized, after working on my first feature, that AD'ing wasn't my calling. It's been a good job while I've been filmmaking, but back in 1994 I realized that I was going to have to put my money where my mouth is. At that point it had been two years since I'd been out of school, and at that point you start to think that if you don't start [making your own films], you never will.

JM: What was the first thing you did?

CG: I did three or four things in school, but my first sort-of professionally-approached dramatic film was called *Blindspot*, about fourteen minutes. It's a sort of dreary, but I hope thought-provoking, film about a woman who hits someone with her car and then drives away. It's all about guilt and personal accountability, how these experiences inform who you are, and who you become.

JM: What role did you play in making that?

CG: In LIFT filmmaking style, I wrote, produced and directed it, like a lot of other LIFT filmmakers.

JM: Is that when you joined LIFT?

CG: I thought I had to start somewhere, and the place to go was LIFT. I wanted to meet other filmmakers, and kind of get a grasp of it. Because there are so many people who want to make films, and that could make really wonderful, original and interesting films, but they can't quite cross that chasm between wanting to make a film and knowing the nuts and bolts of getting started. Going to LIFT was a wonderful thing for that reason. It was at the old location on Adelaide St., and I spent my first three days just sweeping up mouse shit! And I loved it, because I thought it was the right place to start making films. I started attending workshops, and slowly got the idea that you just have to start

AN INTERVIEW WITH CHRISTY GARLAND

JASON MACDERMOTT

anywhere, and eventually you'll have a place to make the film, and a place to screen the film. It's a great support system. That's where I learned about grant applications, and I applied for two grants and I got both the first time I applied for them. So I had \$15,000 in grants. It was a lucky start. I shot it in November of '95. Once I had a cutting copy, and I was working on the edit, I started to apply for grants to finish it, assuming it would be just as easy to get those. Of course I got rejection after rejection, and I didn't get anything. That's where it became a growing experience. It did take me a lot longer to finish it without money, but I think that was the most rewarding way to go about it. It gave me a lot of extra time to watch the cut, so I was pretty happy with every frame that made it into the film.

JM: Why did you become a member of LIFT's Board?

CG: In 1996, after I finished *Blindspot*, I was invited to apply for the Board of Directors. I was put on the Board in the Fall of '96. Ultimately, like all other members of the co-op, I do care about the co-op. Everybody gets to have that input into how it is run, and I thought it would be quite interesting to see how it worked, in terms of organization. I was motivated by the desire to become more of a part of LIFT, because I saw LIFT as being one of those places where you are just constantly running into creative people, filmmakers. LIFT has grown, and become quite big.

JM: How has LIFT changed since you first joined?

CG: When I first joined, well, the old place was really tiny. It felt like an apartment or something. The equipment was in all of these small rooms. Humble beginnings, but impassioned beginnings, too, I think. The membership grew so much, I guess they decided it was time to move. I remember Greg Woodbury, all excited, telling me about the move. They were all so psyched. Greg had planned this massive move, and that was the first thing that put LIFT on another level. Suddenly the nature of the equipment and the kinds of filmmaking styles that LIFT's holdings supported, changed.

The goal of the Board has always been to keep a balance between traditional filmmaking and the newer styles, the Media 100, and all that. It's been a challenge, but I think it's evolving quite nicely. There will always be a push and pull from both sides.

JM: How has this changed your work?

CG: At this time there's a lot of pressure for Canada to make a commercial film industry, and for those people wanting to make a living doing film, it's very tempting for them to want to make films that will do well commercially. There's an emphasis on story and entertainment, although that could be good, too (*Dual Citizen*, my new film, is much more like that, it's a comedy, where *Blindspot* was more of a dark little art film). I'm glad that LIFT filmmakers are making personal films, films that innovate with the form and structure, and don't necessarily pander to formulas. I find these people make very, very honest films.

JM: Can you describe *Dual Citizen*?

CG: It's not a flag-waving, patriotic Canadian film, although it's written from a very Canadian point of view. I wanted to examine our relationship with American culture, and how Canadians have struggled so much with defining what our culture is. I place a Canadian character in an American environment. I took a retiree (of which there are tonnes) that retires in Florida - snowbirds. It was partly inspired by a news story about a fight between neighbours in a trailer

**I spent my first three days JUST
sweeping up mouse shit!
And I loved it, because I thought it
was the right place to start making
films.**

park in the States, because one of them put a Canadian flag up. I found it kind of interesting, and kind of comical, because at the front line of this issue, the people fighting to keep the flag up, are these seniors in Florida. I fictionalized the idea, and it's got to be done in about a month. We just have to do the sound editing, and mixing. It kind of feels like it's all downhill from here. Once you're past the shoot and the edit, it feels a lot better. I feel a large burden is off my shoulders.

JM: The rice is done and now you're just adding the spice.

CG: Exactly, that's a beautiful way of putting it.

Future Projections: an Interview with Alexi Manis

Jason MacDermott

Alexi Manis became a LIFT member last year. She has an interesting take on film, being employed as a projectionist for theatres and film festivals. Her LIFT production debut will be one of the 20th Anniversary short films.

Jason MacDermott: So you're a musician - tell me about your musical past.

Alexi Manis: I always wanted to play guitar, and then one day the doorbell rang, and I got to the door, and a friend of mine had a birthday present behind his back, and it was a guitar. Ever since that day I've been playing it. I've tried bass and keyboards, but mostly guitar. I love music, so I wanted to try to pick it on my own. I have friends in bands, and they teach me little things here and there, so I think I've picked it up really well and I really enjoy it.

JM: How did you come to be a projectionist?

AM: I was going to school at U of T, taking film, and they needed someone to help press "Play" on the VCRs in the film classes. They mainly showed video format. I volunteered, and then I got trained doing 16mm, and eventually 35mm, and then I kind of became the main projectionist at the U of T site. I met some people from a film festival, and now I do probably almost all of them in Toronto. So volunteering part-time during classes turned into a job.

JM: Is there a school for projectionists, or do people just find their way in, like you did?

AM: I don't think there's a school for it, but I wonder if George Brown, or one of those places, has technical courses for it. It's kind of like an apprenticeship. It's like a trade, especially the film part, which is slowly dying out, giving way to video stuff, for which there are courses.

JM: Where did your interest in film come from?

AM: I studied it at U of T, it started with an "Intro to Cinema" course. [The course] started with the early silent stuff, up to... I think Atom Egoyan was the contemporary one when I took it - and every country, and every movement. It was such a great array of information. I was blown away by it. That course got me really interested in film.

JM: When did you want to start making movies?

AM: My Dad gave me a Super-8 camera (this is such a typical story), and a bunch of



old footage of my family from the past. I played around with that camera. Over the years I've been developing a sense of shooting and editing. Although I haven't done any large-scale projects, I really like shooting.

JM: How did being a projectionist play a role in that (or vice versa)?

AM: For awhile I projected for classes that were beyond my experience, like these German films, or Italian films from the 1940s. Then I started to do smaller film festivals, and started projecting these Super-8 films. I got to meet people who were doing "smaller" work, and it becomes a little more accessible. I wish I'd kept a list of all the films I'd seen through projecting them - I don't know if it's millions, but it seems like it's close. So I've always had these images in my head, and it's inspired me to try my own.

JM: So being a projectionist has been your ongoing film course?

AM: Don't quote me on that, but yeah! Often I'll show up at work and not even know the name of the director, but afterward I just thank my lucky stars that I was there to see it, because I wouldn't have seen it otherwise. Then again, I don't get to see it as an audience member sees it, either.

JM: How does being a projectionist affect your approach to making film?

AM: I've just seen a lot, I've stored a lot of information. I kind of see for myself what kind of thing works and what doesn't, and what's intriguing, and what moves me. Over and over I've seen what I don't follow, what I don't agree with, what doesn't move me. It confirms for me what is interesting for me, and what is not. It's the sheer number of

films that I've seen, and not knowing what it is that I'm going to get when I'm projecting - it's kept me open to things.

JM: How did you hear about LIFT, and what compelled you to be a member?

AM: Through all these festivals in Toronto, big and small (mostly the smaller ones, some of which aren't so small anymore), I've met some filmmakers, actors, makeup artists, and all of them have this tie to LIFT. It's sort of a great organization that a lot of different people use, not just filmmakers. They offer workshops, they offer a way of getting into filmmaking if you need sort of a helping hand. So I just joined up about a year ago...

JM: And you're doing one of the 20th Anniversary films.

AM: Yeah, I wrote up a proposal, and I was so surprised that I got it. But yeah, I'm very excited.

JM: Do you have a name for your film?

AM: Well, I did, but I don't like it, so it will change. That's another thing - I've seen so many titles across the screen! I don't know what it's going to be called yet. I've shot most of it already, I'm using my work space as a kind of shooting space, and I'm shooting the reflections of the films that I'm projecting - the film reflects through the glass of the booth and it bounces all over the place. Shooting in the dark is kind of challenging, but I'm using super-fast film. It's turning out fine. Sebastjan at Niagara Custom Labs has done great tests for me, sort of helping me along, helping me with the exposure. Most of the general public hasn't seen the inside of a projection booth, so it's pretty neat to see. Filmmakers may have an awareness of this already.

the reel asian international film festival: adding dimensions to identity

Victor Fan

I have been a little concerned ever since "Asian cinema," as a broad national/stylistic category, has grown to be a media darling with a popular, international audience. Asian filmmakers most readily categorized as part of this group make up only an infinitely small portion of the incredibly multifaceted stream of creative activity by Asian national, Asian independent, and Asian Diaspora filmmakers around the world.

Enter the Reel Asian International Film Festival (November 23-26). The festival chose not to capitalize on Asian cinema's popularity by looking backward at the early films of popular Asian filmmakers. Instead, it introduced its audience to a melange of distinct cultural experiences and personal narratives voices that speak each in their own way to their Asian experiences, and beyond to aspects of identity.

Thursday November 23rd, 8:00pm: Opening Night: Post-Concussion (1999) by Daniel Yoon

This is a charming, well-made comedy in the Hollywood tradition, and a notable achievement by book-taught, first-time local filmmaker Daniel Yoon.

Told through the Korean eyes of Matthew Kang (played by Yoon himself) we follow the management consultant's uber-capitalist lifestyle flipped upside down after he is hit by a car, dumped by his girl, and forced into long recovery from a serious concussion. Based on events from his own life that left him alone, unemployed, and driven to teach himself filmmaking in his mother's basement, Yoon spins a great yarn with some good laughs without getting into pretensions and moralities. In fact, the film never seems to take itself seriously for even a moment.

I personally found it refreshing to see a Hollywood-type story structure unraveling through an empowered set of Korean eyes. But that is not to say that this film addresses the problematic question of the Asian subject in the Hollywood narrative nor would it have been able to without spoiling much of the film that worked well. The often-loaded issues of race and representation that could have been raised were skirted in favour of a well-made, low-cholesterol slapstick film with admirable production values and a mostly strong cast of non-actors.

When asked what statement he tried to make by making the film, Yoon answered with a chuckle. The charm of the film stems from Yoon's genuine desire to just try to make us chuckle, and not to ask why to find the humour in a fate that, without moral or meaning, can screw us over for no good reason.

Friday November 24, 10:15pm

And So and So (2000), by Kwok Wai-Lung

And So and So is a series of episodic vignettes that jerk between 35mm and digital video, in and out of different layers of narration. Taken as a whole, this forms a personal, idiosyncratic portrait of Hong Kong.

The film sketches a post-97 Hong Kong that remains alienated and confused. In Kwok's world, traditional structures like family, food, and sexual relationships are made ambiguous by unusual languages, customs and cultural signs.

At its best moments, the nuances in each episode reveal the damaged psyche of an insane city through arresting images of strange rituals vilifying the dead, of piss on a toilet seat, of desperately lonely people perpetually trapped in complete self-infatuation. Kwok's Hong Kong is a haunting maze of streets co-inhabited by both the dead and the living, whose memories and anxieties echo in the sounds and music of the film, threatening at any time to swallow up its inhabitants.

Sunday November 26, 4:15pm

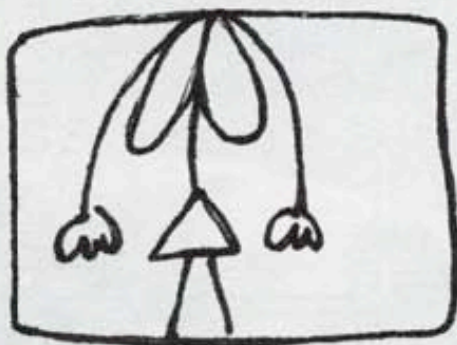
**The World According to Ann Marie Fleming
(Curated by Helen Lee)**

It would be unfair and inaccurate to discuss Ann Marie Fleming's films in any one context alone be it Asian or otherwise. Programmed in a non-linear fashion by Helen Lee, we explore the oeuvre of an accomplished filmmaker/ animator/video-artist whose résumé includes *New Shoes: an Interview in Exactly 5 Minutes* (1990, one of *The 5 Feminist Minutes*), and a self-described "blip" with the Canadian Film Centre, *La Fabula Della Bella Familia auf du World* (1993).

This program spans eleven years of development and several phases of self. Some of the films here include the above-mentioned *La Fabula Della Bella Familia auf du World*, a surrealist account of culture and the extended family made while with the CFC, and *Pioneers of X-Ray Technology: a Film about Grandpa* (1991), an endearing, personal pseudo-documentary exploring the stories of her own family. *You Take Care Now* (1989), *New Shoes: an Interview in Exactly 5 Minutes* (1990), and *AMF's Tiresias* (1998) are three very different films that all approach issues of gender identity and sexuality using very different forms and approaches. These three appealed most to me individually, each affecting me in its own way; and, when taken together, serving as examples of the artist's shifting sensibility over a decade of work.

The last two years that I have followed the Reel Asian Film Festival, I have also followed the development of the independent Asian and Asian Diaspora cinematic voice. This is a disparate body of films from across the globe that is clearly unique from, while often working self-consciously against, both popular Asian cinema and the Hollywood tradition. The festival occupies a separate, yet parallel, space from the internationally popular brand of Asian cinema. The festival in its four years has evolved into its own role, showing us a wide array of narratives each in its own way speaking of, speaking to, and speaking from the experience of being Asian, and being dispersed into every corner of the Earth.

images top to bottom: two from Anne Marie Fleming



CHRISTMAS PARTY



Michelle Messina, Roberto Ariganello, Darya Farha



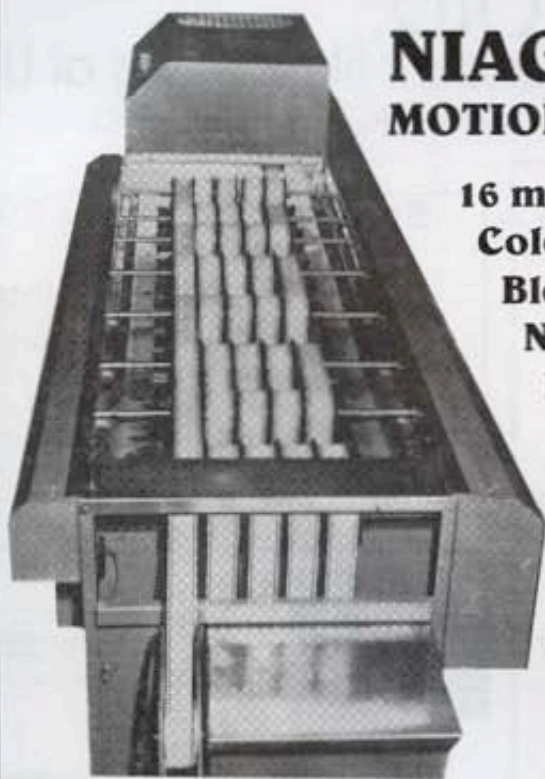
Laurie Stevenson & Michelle Messina



Jason Suedath & Brenda Kovrig



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ads & classifieds:

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Jason Romilly will be guest editing the March/April issue of the Newsletter. Contact the office if you are interested in writing for the next issue.

**Upcoming
deadlines:
March 16,
2001**

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
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full page (7" x 9 1/2")	\$240.00
inside back cover (7" x 9 1/2")	\$360.00
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Contact the office for details. 416 588-6444.

CELLULOID:

celebrating 20 years of independent filmmaking at LIFT
THE LIAISON OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS OF TORONTO

**Screenings: April 3, 4, 5, 6, 2001
Symposium & Distribution Panel:
April 14 & 15, 2001**

Screenings and Artist Talks at the
Cinematheque Ontario:

Retro-Celluloid: The Past

Two screenings of short film works created by LIFT members between 1981 and 1997. Curated by Susan Oxtoby

The State of Celluloid: The Present

A showcase of LIFT members' films from 1997 to 2000. Curated by Barbara Goslawski

Self & Celluloid: The Future

A screening of 15 new works created by LIFT members for LIFT's 20th Anniversary

Films by: Daniel Cockburn, John Greyson, Mike Hoolboom, Ali Kazimi, Tobi Lampard, Helen Lee, Sara Maclean, Alexi Manis, Wrik Mead, Midi Onodera, Izabella Pruska-Oldenhof, Michele Stanley, Jeff Sterne, Brian Stockton, Kika Thorne.

Screenings will be followed by Artist talks and Parties!

Symposium and panel at the
Images Festival of Independent Film & Video:

Other Cinemas: A Symposium on Film in the Age of Electronic Reproduction

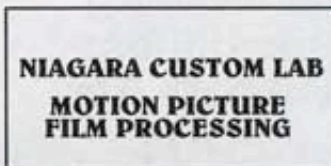
Discussions exploring the meaning and context of working specifically in film in the digital age.

Making Contact: Distribution for Independent Film & Video Makers

We have invited representatives of leading companies and organizations in independent media distribution to discuss strategies and approaches to distribution for independent film and video makers.

Sponsors of LIFT's 20th Anniversary "Self & Celluloid Films":

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