

The Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto is proud to present>



LIFT 20th Anniversary 2001>2002 Canada Tour  
Celluloid: Celebrating 20 Years of Independent Filmmaking

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The Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto (LIFT) is a non-profit film co-op which has been supporting and encouraging Toronto-area independent filmmaking since 1981. To its membership of over 600, LIFT provides: affordable access to production equipment and post-production facilities; workshops and seminars; public screenings of members' films; a bi-monthly newsletter; production grants; crew location services; a discount program at labs and supply houses; and information resources on film production, exhibition, broadcast and distribution.

Over the years, thousands of independent filmmakers have passed through LIFT's doors. LIFT alumni include: Atom Egoyan, Clement Virgo, Bruce McDonald, Patricia Rozema, Jeremy Podeswa, Adrienne Mitchell and Janis Lundman. Throughout its existence, LIFT has been a place for filmmakers to make films, meet other filmmakers, learn from each other, share ideas and gain inspiration.

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on the front cover: **Letters From Home** by Mike Hoolboom; **Zyklon Portrait** by Elida Schogt; **Hand Job** by Wrik Mead.



# Foreword

by Larissa Fan

**T**he two programmes presented as part of the LIFT 20th Anniversary Tour comprise a snapshot of LIFT filmmakers past, present and future. **Celluloid: The Future** is a programme of work specially commissioned by LIFT in 2001 to celebrate its 20th anniversary.

**Celluloid: Past & Present** showcases the diverse range of films that have come out of LIFT in the past and near-past, culled from two larger programmes originally curated by Susan Oxtoby and Barbara Goslawski.

In “Screensplitting” Daniel Cockburn reflects on his approach to making his double-screen presentation **The Other Shoe**, and provides a cogent and conflicted introductory essay on the two programmes for your reading pleasure.

Included at the back of this programme book is a guide to film and video production co-ops across the country by Jonathan Culp. As we each struggle in our own ways to continue to produce and support independent media, it is easy to feel that we are alone in our endeavours. So here is a celebration not only of LIFT’s successes, but also of the co-operative spirit and hard work that keeps all of these like-minded organizations going.





# Screensplitting

by Daniel Cockburn

**I**s the purpose of an anniversary to lose oneself in nostalgia for the numbered years gone by, or to prepare a new vision for the unnumbered ones to come? Both, of course... but it's easier to talk about the past than the future. The past can be counted and recorded and filed; the future is a little more slippery. So when LIFT celebrated its 20th Anniversary in 2001, screening a retrospective of its members' two decades of filmmaking (**Celluloid: Past & Present**) was the natural thing to do. But how to look in the other direction—that is, how to compile a programme of films that have not yet been made? The obvious answer (obvious in retrospect, at least) is to make those films. So LIFT gave cash and equipment to eight selected applicants and seven invited film and video artists, setting them loose to create short works that would be personal responses to the theme **Self & Celluloid: The Future**.

Coherence may be in the eye of the perceiver, but it seems to me that the two programmes, **Past & Present** and **Future**, have a discernible throughline: the notion of history. Not history just in the sense of things dead and done, but in the sense of a living continuum in which the present is one link in a narrative chain. Explicitly or implicitly, stylistically or content-wise, the films featured in the Anniversary programmes express themselves as moments in this continuum.

## The Old...

It's already old hat to dichotomize film and video in terms of tradition vs. progress, but habits die hard, and the "film=old, video=new" contrast is a useful shorthand—not to mention a historical fact. So we can apply it with care, remaining open to instances where a particular work turns it inside out and reveals its oversimplification.

Take, for example, the heavily scratched and flickering presence of the celluloid in Christopher Chong's **Minus**. The filmmaker's naked dancing body, tripled through multiple exposure, remains veiled by the film's handprocessed texture; the medium's unmissable physicality, by association, is as eroticized as the dancer's. Such (literal) fetishization of film is a loud call for preservation of its hands-on sexiness. Wrik Mead's **Cupid** is a close companion of **Minus**; it too is a succinct shot of homo-/auto-eroticism, and it too revels in its own grainy nature. Cupid's willing imprisonment by his own libido, viewed through a dirty (glory?) hole in the film frame, presents celluloid as the happily seedy side of town.

Both **Minus** and **Cupid** are from the **Past & Present** programme, but have kin in the **Future**: Michèle Stanley's **Fix** offers its handscratched and painted texture as one in a series of landscapes: natural, industrial, bodily, and filmic. Izabella Pruska-Oldenhof's **Light Magic** goes even further back historically, to the early 19th century's photogram technique, in order to



create a Brakhagian barrage of colour and shapes. These two irony-free films gain a point of view by simple virtue of their presence in **The Future**; the abstract isn't ready to die yet, nor are the old-school techniques of abstraction.

### ... + The New

But is LIFT an exclusive club of filmic fuddy-duddies, lamenting the impending demise of their beloved medium? Apparently not; even in the **Past & Present** programme, video begins to rear its pixelated head. Granted, it's just a single shot in Christopher McKay's **Fries With That**, and its context in this sensitive stop-motion film carries quite the Egoyanesque denotation of loss. But Kristiina Szabo's **Dragonfly**, though as optical-printing-centric as any film in the two programmes, is stylistically MTV through and through—music-video impressionism without the corporate co-opting.

**Futureward**: Instead of trying to surmount CGI's synthetic quality, Mike Hoolboom's **Secret** flaunts it, providing a too-smoothly rendered fetus as a nightmare vision of cultural and genetic homogenization. **Secret**'s 2.5 minutes would provide more than enough videophobia to go around... if only its images weren't so seductive. Midi Onodera's **Slightseer**, in its exhortation for the preservation of painful history, embraces video more fully insofar as it proves that film does not have a monopoly on memory. The "splitscreen didacticism" of Kika Thorne's **The Up + the down** contrasts political activism with angsty teen boredom, and from its camcorder documentation of both milieus, one can extrapolate the potential virtues and pitfalls of video's ease. Certainly the medium allows for more, and more

potent, activist imagemaking than film ever did; on the other hand, it also allows for more, and more aimless, documentation of one's own aimlessness than ever before.

### The Traditionalists

"You've seen this movie hundreds of times... Doesn't matter who wrote it... It's all the same play anyway." So says David Roche in the film adaptation of his monologue, **David Roche Talks To You About Love** (Jeremy Podeswa). Roche is bitter about everything—that is, movies and romance—but in that Woody Allenishly endearing mode. Sure, he's peeved at Hollywood's romantic ideals and genre tropes... but, as with his boyfriends, he loves that which he hates. **David Roche Talks To You About Love** is itself bound up in tradition, belonging to that most unjustly maligned of genres, "theatrical cinema." In bravely aligning itself with old-fashioned theatricality, it (more than most films) lives or dies on the strength of its audience's willingness to participate. Its death on TV and VCR for a single spectator is nigh-absolute... but its potential for success with an open audience is well worth the risk.

Other **Past & Present** films incorporate the idea of tradition more explicitly. Mike Hoolboom's **Letters From Home** poetically renders the reconfiguration of individual and collective personality in the wake of AIDS, positing change not as a victimizing force but as a tool to be seized and wielded.

"Remember that one day the AIDS crisis will be over, and when that day has come and gone, there will be people alive on this earth who hear that once, there was a terrible disease, and a brave group of people stood up and fought—and, in some cases, died—so



that others might live and be free.” Defiantly hopeful, **Letters From Home** writes itself and its time as a living piece of future history.

Elida Schogt’s **Zyklon Portrait** has a similar agenda, but with its eyes set on the past. Superficially belonging to the subgenre of “diaristic Holocaust film,” it explodes that tradition (to which we have by now, unfortunately, become inured) by mingling it with a variety of other genres and viewpoints: the “educational science film” genre forms **Zyklon Portrait**’s framework; its omniscient narrator suddenly takes on the identity of Rudolph Hess; death by gas chamber is rendered subjectively by the film’s total breakdown and abstraction. The result is a hybrid film which, by initially distancing us (who would have thought to scrutinize Nazism at the molecular level?), ultimately breaks through our desensitization.

But if you want an essay on film tradition and genre, you can skip reading the rest of this and just watch John Greyson’s **Nunca**. As unflaggingly punning and campy as you’d expect from the man who made **Un©ut**, its semiotic analysis of pop lyrics, gender identity, and cinematic grammar culminates in a manifesto, which itself culminates in a big purposeful——. Whether this is a pessimistic or hopeful **Future** vision depends on what you fill in the blank with.

Optimism is more clear-cut in some of the other **Future** films: Ali Kazimi with **I drop...** and Tobi Lampard with **My Beautiful Ugly Sweater** present themselves, their ancestors, and their children as conduits for both filmmaking and familial tradition. Helen Lee’s **Star** gives us the child only, but through something as simple as a song implies that video is still in its infancy, and thus as full of potential—and maybe even innocence!—as its youthful performer.

## The Exhibitionists

While **David Roche Talks To You About Love** is dependent on its screening atmosphere for success, some films in **The Future** take exhibition itself as their subject matter. Alexi Manis’ **Luminous** is a love letter to film projection, a document of the mini-movies that occur on the walls of the projection booth due to the booth glass’s reflection of the beam. Wrik Mead’s **Hand Job** looks and feels like a silent movie about a man watching silent movies—and bursts into a wash of gay porn, climaxing in a shot that suggests the uber-masturbatory nature of filmgoing.

And, returning to the film/video dichotomy for a moment, I must reveal my complicity in that mental framework. As one of the **Future** filmmakers, I created my piece **The Other Shoe** solely in dismayed response to my discovery that the commissioned works would be streamed on the internet. That may be fine for some people, I thought—without (much) prejudice—but not for those of us who still relish the surrender of darkened-theatre viewing. So I created the only loophole I could think of: I made a double projection of 16mm and video. The video portion was designed to be streamed on the internet, but the film portion (that is, the film I initially wanted to make) could only be seen by those who physically attended its screening. If that isn’t simplistic film fetishism, I don’t know what is.

## Anti-Thesis

Unfortunately for me and my biases, **The Other Shoe** ended up being as much of an ode to hypertext and multitasking as it was to camera obscura contemplation. If I learned anything from making that film/video, it was the humbling joy to be derived from the knowl-



edge that a work created with the most simple-minded of intentions can, in failing to fully make its point, become a more engagingly conflicted and complex piece of work than the obstinate brain from whence it sprung. The same, I hope, can be said of this essay.

Old hats and habits die hard. I offer these old/new video/film past/future left/right up/down splitscreens as rectilinear prisms purposefully designed to be incapable of holding all instances and arguments. You could probably already see them cracking; **The Other Shoe** is by no means the only work cited here with too many facets to squish into a bisected box.

On which side of any of those halved rectangles, for example, do we place something like **Primiti Too Taa** (Ed Ackerman & Colin Morton)? Prehistoric vocal poetry means “the past”; is its typewritten animated counterpart then “the future”? Or is the typewriter too much “the past” now, relegated as it is to analog nostalgia? And what of **Machine Machine Machine Machine** (Sara MacLean), the most “narrative” film of **The Future**, unassumingly witty and without a shred of self-referential speculation? Or **Self: [Portrait/ Fulfillment] A Film by the Blob Thing** (Brian Stockton), which through its collision of Bolex CinemaScope and Bergmanesque claymation seeks to obliterate tradition and meaning in a gale of self-deprecating laughter? Dichotomies and splitscreens are meant to be exploded, if only so we have pieces to pick up, inspect, and recombine.

Let us close, or open, with Jeff Sterne’s **Technical Drunk**, the third splitscreen of **The Future** (fourth, if you count **Slightseer**’s binocularism). Like **The Other Shoe**, it situates film on the left and video on the right... but no judgement is on display, merely acceleration. Film loops and alcohol in a grungy toilet stall. The beer

is drunk, the bottle smashed. The film threatens to break. Video pulses with cyclical fire. The shots get shorter. Destruction or elation. On either side. The future of the moving image is either so dire that there’s nothing to do but get hammered, or so promising that we should all get celebratorily sloshed. Get drunk. Pick up the pieces. Repeat.

October 2001



# The Screenings >



# Self and Celluloid: The Future

**F**ilms are as much about the filmmaker as they are about the medium itself. In this programme, fifteen filmmakers examine how they see themselves in relation to their medium as they look into the future.

Commissioned for LIFT's 20th anniversary celebrations in 2001, the results reflect the diverse scope of styles, techniques, subjects and visions created through this vibrant film co-op.



**The Other Shoe** Daniel Cockburn >16mm/Video, 5.5 minutes, 2001

**The Other Shoe** straddles the line between media, questioning its validity on either side. It attempts to engage its viewers in the conflict between contemplation and multi-tasking, and hopes it doesn't shoot itself in the foot.



**Nunca** John Greyson >Video, 7 minutes, 2001

Two tragic queens, Contraria and Negativa, meditate on the phenomenon of negative pop lyrics ("never can say goodbye", "can't buy me love") and their neologistic relation to the future of avant-garde cinema. Quite simply, a manifesto. Or a hissy fit. Or something.



**Secret** Michael Hoolboom >Video, 2.5 minutes, 2001

Maya confesses her secret.





**I drop...** Ali Kazimi >Video, 4 minutes, 2001

A dialogue with six year old Alaric McKenzie-Boone as he handles a video camera for the first time.



**Slightseer** Midi Onodera >Video, 3.5 minutes, 2001

Some people say that cinema in its present state is on the verge of dying. But film is more than just the chemistry concealed within its format—it is imagination, faith, suspension of belief; it is our collective past. Without the thirst to quench our vision, we are simply sightseers in a “global image economy.”



**Technical Drunk** Jeff Sterne >Video, 3 minutes, 2001

The playful thrills and plunders of a filmmaker in the digital age.



**The Up + the down** Kika Thorne >Video, 6 minutes, 2001

A splitscreen didacticism contrasting an improvised drama of idle youth with footage from the June 15th riot at Queen's Park in Toronto by the Toronto Video Activist Collective (TVAC).



# Celluloid: Past and Present

**A** celebration of some of the best films both new and old to come out of LIFT, this programme showcases the diversity and experimentation that are the hallmarks of independent filmmaking.



**Cupid** Wrik Mead >16mm, 3 minutes, 1998  
Cupid as you've never seen him before.



**Dragonfly** Kristiina Szabo >Video, 9.5 minutes, 2000  
Age-old myths and contemporary mores combine to create a meditation on lost love, pain and renewal.



**Fries With That** Christopher McKay >16mm, 4.5 minutes, 1999  
McKay elucidates a child's understanding of the experience of dying. There is a fine line between innocence and wisdom, and sometimes consolation can be found in a box of french fries.



**Zyklon Portrait** Elida Schogt >16mm, 13 minutes, 1999  
**Zyklon Portrait** illustrates how the pesticide Zyklon B was transformed into a genocidal weapon by the Nazis. Out of this chilling historical detail, Schogt draws an affecting personal story using family photographs, underwater photography and hand-painted footage.





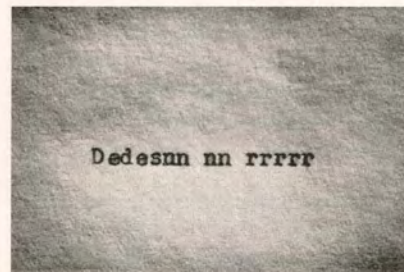
**Minus** Christopher Chong >16mm, 3 minutes, 1999  
Minus gently celebrates the male body and its frailties, as ghost-like images flicker in and out of the fluid haze of this hand-processed film.



**Letters From Home** Mike Hoolboom  
>16mm, 15 minutes, 1996  
Begun with a speech by Vito Russo, **Letters** enjoins a chorus of speakers to sound off on AIDS, love and death. Impelled with a variety of formal procedures, this series of mini-portraits is generously furbished with found footage extracts, hand-processed dilemmas, Super-8 psychodramas, pixilated phantasms, intergalactic warfare and a hot kiss in a cool shower.



**David Roche Talks To You About Love**  
Jeremy Podeswa >16mm, 22 minutes, 1983  
“If you really want to find out about love, I suppose I’m the person to ask,” muses David Roche in this filmed version of his play. A terrifically funny presentation of one man’s philosophies concerning life and love.



**Primiti Too Taa** Ed Ackerman, Colin Morton  
>16mm, 3 minutes, 1986  
Concrete poetry in motion. Nonsense phrases form the source of this delightfully absurdist play on words, as primitive sounds meet their typed representation. A witty tribute to Canada’s master of abstract animation, Norman McLaren.



# Artist Biographies

## Ed Ackerman

From Sesame Street to IMAX, Ed Ackerman has explored cinematic language with what is close at hand: plasticine, photocopier, typewriter or children let loose with disposable cameras. Films include **Sarah's Dream**, **5¢ a Copy**, **Two Taa Too**, and **Innocent Vision**.

## Christopher Chong

**Minus** is Christopher Chong's first 16mm film, following his Super-8 claymation **Crash Skid Love** (1998). Born in Malaysia, raised in Calgary and now living in Toronto, Chris is learning about film through hand-processing.

## Daniel Cockburn

Daniel Cockburn is a filmmaker, writer, and musician who lives in Toronto. **The Other Shoe** is his first widescreen motion picture. Someday he might like to make one which requires only one projector.

## Mike Hoolboom

Mike Hoolboom is a prolific film and video maker and writer, and an advocate for artists' film and video. He has made more than 40 fringe films and is the author of **Inside the Pleasure Dome: Fringe Film in Canada** and **Plague Years: A Life in Underground Movies**.

## John Greyson

John Greyson is a video artist, filmmaker, activist, and writer who has been producing work since the early 1980s. Recent films include **Lilies** (1996), **Un@ut** (1997) and **The Law of Enclosures** (2000).

## Ali Kazimi

Ali Kazimi is a documentary maker whose works have won awards and honours worldwide. Films include **Narmada: a Valley Rises** (1994), **Shooting Indians** (1997), **Some Kind of Arrangement** (1998) and **Passage From India** (1998).

## Tobi Lampard

Tobi Lampard is a filmmaker known for the short films **Remember in**

**Between the Forget and Salome, Darling**. Tobi holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in film and video from the University of Regina.

## Helen Lee

Helen Lee is a writer, programmer and filmmaker. Her short films include **Subrosa**, **Prey**, and **Sally's Beauty Spot**. Helen recently completed her first feature, **The Art of Woo**, through the Canadian Film Centre's First Feature program.

## Sara MacLean

Sara MacLean has a Masters in Drama from the University of Toronto and is studying film at Ryerson Polytechnic University. **Machine Machine Machine** is her third short film.

## Alexi Manis

Alexi Manis works as a projectionist and technical director for many of Toronto's film and video festivals. As an artist she has worked with Super-8 and video; **Luminous** is her first foray into 16mm.

## Christopher McKay

Christopher McKay is a Toronto-based filmmaker whose work has shown at film festivals around the world, and at home on the CBC. His focus recently has been on traditional 3-D clay animation.

## Wrik Mead

Filmmaker Wrik Mead has been making pixilated, queer-identity psychodramas for over a decade. He currently teaches at the Ontario College of Art and Design.

## Colin Morton

Colin Morton's visual and sound poetry appears in national and international anthologies. He has performed his work with the jazz group Sugarbeat and the intermedia group First Draft. Author of a novel and six books of poetry, he lives in Ottawa.



#### Midi Onodera

Midi Onodera is an award-winning filmmaker who has been directing, producing and writing films for seventeen years. She has over 20 independent short films to her credit, a feature film (*Skin Deep*) and is working on a DVD cyber-performance piece.

#### Jeremy Podeswa

Jeremy Podeswa is a graduate of the American Film Institute in Advanced Film Studies. His debut feature, *Eclipse* (1994), was nominated for two Genie Awards. *The Five Senses* (1999) won the 1999 Toronto-City Award for Best Canadian Feature Film at the Toronto International Film Festival.

#### Izabella Pruska-Oldenhof

Izabella Pruska-Oldenhof is a graduate of the media arts program at the Ryerson Polytechnic University. She is co-founder of the cross-disciplinary group the Loop Collective, and works in a variety of multimedia capacities in Toronto.

#### Elida Schogt

Elida Schogt graduated with an MA in Media Studies from the New School for Social Research in New York. *Zyklon Portrait* is the first in her trilogy of films on Holocaust memory and family history.

#### Michèle Stanley

Michèle Stanley is a filmmaker and photographer who is currently completing the film studies program at Ryerson Polytechnic University.

#### Jeff Sterne

Since graduating from the Sheridan College film program in 1996, Jeff Sterne has directed and produced a handful of documentaries that play with the complexities of contemporary narrative.

#### Brian Stockton

Brian Stockton began making films at the age of eleven and has continued for the past 26 years. His extensive body of work includes documentary, drama, music videos and animation. Brian recently finished writing, producing and directing for *Internet Slutts* on the Comedy Network.

#### Kristiina Szabo

Kristiina Szabo has always been an avid experimenter as well as a firm believer in the relevance of painting, photography and graphic design to the filmmaker's art.

#### Kika Thorne

Kika Thorne makes art, experimental TV and group action, and is a co-founder of SHE/tv (1991-98). Her award-winning films and videos have screened internationally.



# All Geared Up: Film and Video Equipment Co-ops in Canada

by Jonathan Culp

Canada is home to a wealth of film and video cooperatives—artist-run production centres where people come together to share skills, resources and labour. This community spirit is not constrained within each group, but extends into a nation-wide network of solidarity and support. This article provides a brief round-up of recent goings-on at co-ops from coast to coast.

## Atlantic Filmmakers' Co-op (AFCOOP)

"Personally, I'm \$40,000-plus in debt to learn to make films, to quiet the dirty voices that would otherwise drive me crazy," says Production Coordinator Chris Spencer-Lowe from Halifax. "So I'd feel pretty ridiculous if I didn't do all I can to promote [the medium]." Conceived in a bar by half a dozen local filmmakers in 1974, today AFCOOP has 270 members. While video enthusiasts may patronize Halifax's other co-op, the Centre for Art Tapes, AFCOOP is "Capital F," according to Chris. "Film is still incredibly strong. People won't accept going to a theatre and seeing a video."

P.O. Box 2043-Station M, Halifax, NS B3J 2Z1  
t 902.420.4572 f 902.420.4573  
<afcoop@supercity.ns.ca> www.supercity.ns.ca/~afcoop

## La Bande Vidéo

"Keeping artists in Quebec City is our most pressing issue," says La Bande Vidéo's Claude Paquet. "Many artists leave for Montreal." A familiar pattern—but one that La Bande Vidéo has managed to chal-

lenge for its 50 members. In addition to the familiar equipment services and members' committees, they offer grant counseling and an artists' residency program. They also have a strong focus on distribution, fostering ties with festivals in France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Morocco.

541, de St-Vallier Est, B.P.2, Quebec QC G1K 3P9  
t 418.522.5561 f 418.522.4041  
<labandevideo@meduse.org> www.meduse.org/labandevideo

## The Calgary Society of Independent Filmmakers (CSIF)

Over four thousand members' films and public-library discards inhabit CSIF's huge film library. The co-op also coordinates a documentary club, the \$100 Film Festival, and a gay and lesbian fest for pride week—with a third festival in the works. ("We do the work of six people!" says CSIF Coordinator of Operations Tracy Stewart.) Membership (\$55 for producing members) has almost tripled in five years.

Box 23177 Connaught PO, Calgary, AB T2R 0X8  
t 403.205.4747 f 403.237.5838  
<info@csif.org> www.csif.org

## Cinevic

"It's not a school per se, but it is a learning place," says Events Coordinator Sharon Joseph of Cinevic. Their ambitious goal is to facilitate film and video production at minimal cost. For beginners, this usually means an emphasis on the video end of the equation. "Video enables you to learn quickly, cheaply. You can make more mistakes." Special features including a 4-part progressive film workshop, free advertising resources, a large 16mm film library and an ongoing collaborative relationship with the Screen Actors Studio.



#### Cinevic cont'd

101-610 Johnson St., Victoria, BC V8W 1M6  
t 250.389.1590 f 250.380.1547  
<cinevic@idmail.com> mypage.direct.ca/v/vifvf/cinehome.html

#### Cineworks Independent Filmmakers' Society

Vancouver's Cineworks is host to a monthly "Cinematic Salon," which features directors and other film professionals in an informal discussion setting. Workshops include sound, production management, and the esoteric arts of hand-processing and cameraless animation. And they have a broad range of equipment—including a non-sync 35mm camera! Once or twice a year, they showcase members' films in a New Works screening. A mentorship program is currently in the works.

1131 Howe Street, Suite 300, Vancouver, BC V6Z 2L7  
t 604.685.3841 f 604.685.9685  
<cineworks@radiant.net> www.cineworks.ca

#### Ed Video Media Arts Centre

Based in Guelph, Ontario, Ed Video has been serving Southern Ontario since 1976, with cheap equipment, training and workshops, and exhibitions—including the recent "Big Box" screening in support of the community's anti-Wal-Mart mobilization. "We get a lot of people out to our events," says Artistic Director Mary Cross, "and they're not just the crowd that goes to art events. We have real community support happening here."

16a Wyndham St. N. Box 1629, Guelph, ON N1H 6R7  
t 519.836.9811  
<edvideo@albedo.net> www.albedo.net/ed-video

#### Film and Video Arts Society of Alberta (FAVA)

"Most people here are super nice—except for one or two people, of course," says former Membership Coordinator Mari Sasano. FAVA's Canon XL-1 DV camera costs \$40/day—"everyone's all over that one now"—and a Bolex camera goes for \$15/day. They also offer crash courses in video and 16mm film. "It's Edmonton. We're frontier. We have hardly any film industry here, and to have all these people working, just having this community here, is so great... oh, and we're probably the only co-op in Canada that has its own hockey team!"

9722-102 Street, Edmonton, AB T5K 0X4  
t/f 780.429.1671  
<fava@worldgate.com> www.fava.ca

#### The Independent Filmmakers' Co-op of Ottawa (IFCO)

"There was no film industry here before... we were an integral part of helping the industry grow in Ottawa," says Technical Coordinator Dino Koutras. Boasting over 100 members, IFCO produces a weekly bulletin, and coordinates the "Chicks & Flicks" women directors' showcase. "We focus on the independent artist's vision," says Koutras, "We don't support commercial productions."

Arts Court, 2 Daly Avenue, Ottawa, ON K1N 6E2  
t 613.569.1789  
<ifco@ifco.ca> www.ifco.on.ca

#### Island Media Arts Co-op (IMAC)

Located in the nation's smallest province, it's no surprise that IMAC is the nation's smallest equipment co-op—its sixty members enjoy access to Charlottetown's cheapest film and video resources. "Whenever possible we give the equipment for free," says



pics (left to right): LIFT screening of Cineworks films 08/97; CSIF—On location at the Summer Media Arts Camp for Teens 8/01.



pics (left to right): From the FAVA CJSR hockey team finals in the Green Pepper Hockey League 00; LIFT plays volleyball 7/01.



Coordinator Pan Wendt. These days, IMAC finds its focus shifting to video. "People will kill me for saying this, but 16mm is a declining medium. The only way to do indie is video. Which is harsh, because film is a beautiful medium."

PO Box 2726, Charlottetown, PE C1A 8C3  
t 902.892.3131 f 902.628.2019  
<imac@isn.net> www.islandmedia.pe.ca

#### The Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto (LIFT)

In addition to their 16mm arsenal and digital post (Media 100 and ProTools), LIFT serves budget-conscious filmmakers with some of Canada's best Super-8 resources (including cameras at \$4/day for full members) and two Oxberry animation stands. Members contribute to special events, a bi-monthly newsletter, equipment decisions, and a wide assortment of workshops from publicity to direction.

37 Hanna Avenue, Suite 301, Toronto, ON M6K 1W8  
t 416.588.6444 f 416.588.7017  
<lift@inforamp.net> www.lift.on.ca

#### Main Film

One thing that sets Montreal's Main Film apart from its companions across the country is the absence of volunteer hour requirements. "Members are not willing to do voluntary time," says Administrative Director Julien Belleteste. "If we do that here we'll have no one." With over 100 productions a year, though, members are making good use of their time. Main offers all of the expected equipment resources—from Super-8 to LightWorks—as well as a quarterly magazine and crew database.

4067, boul. St-Laurent #303, Montreal QC H2W 1Y7

t 514.845.7442 f 514.845.0718  
<info@mainfilm.qc.ca> www.mainfilm.qc.ca

#### New Brunswick Filmmakers' Co-op

The New Brunswick Filmmakers' Co-op in Fredericton exists "primarily to help New Brunswickers tell their stories," says Membership Services worker Kathie LeBlanc. In addition to supporting their 160 members through its equipment services and production fund, this year the co-op is holding its first-ever Tidal Wave Film Festival. "The Atlantic Film Festival is pretty glitzy and pretty big," LeBlanc says, "and local people don't feel they're being recognized... the AFF is great, but we want to do something different."

PO Box 1537-Station A, Fredericton, NB E3B 4Y1  
t 506.455.1632 f 506.457.2006  
<nbfilmco-op@brunnet.net> www.brunnet.net/nbfilm/

#### Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers' Co-op (NIFCO)

St. John's NIFCO offers a two-part Basic Filmmaking course, in which ten participants write and shoot, then edit, a five-minute film. They also offer a First Time Filmmakers program, with funding and crew assistance, and mentors for production and post. To top it off, membership costs a whopping five bucks. "You may come on board, and you don't have the money for everything right off," says Coordinator Jean Smith. "Come to us, tell us what you've got, and we'll try to work with you."

40 Kings Road, St. John's, NF A1C 3P5  
t 709.753.6121  
<nifco@nfld.com> enterprise.newcomm.net/filmcan/NIFCO.htm



### Saskatchewan Filmpool Cooperative

At the Filmpool, a \$60 full membership enables you to join one of their burgeoning committees, and a shot at the co-op's generous granting program. Each year, they produce six half-hour episodes of "Splice TV," a showcase which airs on local cable—and, somehow, on DUTV in Philadelphia! They also provide travel grants for members. And for travelling filmmakers, they have a Visiting Artist Program with full access for \$10/month.

1822 Scarth St. #301, Regina, SK S4P 2G3  
t 306.757.8818 f 306.757.3622  
<web@filmpool.ca> www.filmpool.ca

### SAW Video

Ottawa's SAW Video emerged from the gallery of the same name in the early 80s. Today it boasts 130 members, two AVID editing systems, plus Betacam, Hi8 and Digital Video cameras. They also have ghosts. "We're attached to the old jail—the building we're in was the courthouse," says SAW's Linda Norstrom. "Especially if you've been editing for around 20 hours straight... you start hearing things."

67 Nicholas St., Ottawa, ON K1N 7B9  
t 613.238.7648 f 613.238.4617  
<sawvideo@cyberus.ca> www.sawvideo.com

### Trinity Square Video

On their 30th anniversary, Trinity waxes enthusiastic about co-operative virtues. "In the long run, it's probably cheaper than owning," says former Executive Director Mike Malone, "and by being a member, you can be part of a community, and share their ideas and insights." 200 members access equipment at 40% or less of the commercial

rate. There's an edit suite tailored for web video streaming, and an exhibition gallery.

35 McCaul Street, Suite 110, Toronto, ON M5T 1V7  
t 416.593.1332 f 416.593.0958  
<staff@trinitysquarevideo.com> www.trinitysquarevideo.com

### Video In

Vancouver's Video In—uniquely for an equipment centre—is run collectively, and has been for 27 years. "We almost turf it out all the time," says Production and Technical Coordinator Lindsay Brown. "A collective works well if everyone works as hard as everyone else." This commitment to process lends itself to a strong community presence, from programs like "Deaf at VI" to a quarterly advisory committee, open to non-members. And now they have a book, **Making Video "In,"** about the history of the co-op and alternative video on the West Coast.

1965 Main Street, Vancouver, BC V5T 3C1  
t 604.872.8337 f 604.876.1185  
<info@videoinstudios.com> www.video-in.com

### Video Verite

Video Verite—formerly the People's Video Collective—has been serving Saskatoon for 10 years. Producing members access "cameras and edit suites and digital and analog and audio and multimedia," trumpets Program Coordinator Barbara Clanchy. Their volunteer-credit system is the most generous in Canada, good for up to 100% of your bill. "When we started, it was a smallish group that couldn't afford the equipment," Clanchy observes, echoing a persistent theme. "Now, video artists can afford to own their own—so we have to really broaden and become part of this whole discourse."



pics (left to right): Cathie LeBlanc's production of *Those Eyes* (99) marked the first use of the NB Film Co-op's new digital camera; Janis Lundman and crew on location for *Close Your Eyes* and *Think of England* 5/97; Sally Lee and Mark Wihak at LIFT screening of Saskatchewan Film Pool films 3/93; LIFT and CFMDC present *Token and Taboo* with Kika Thorne and Marnie Parrell 4/91. (Lift photos courtesy of John Porter.)



pics (left to right): Lisa Hayes and Allyson Mitchell at LIFT 7/98; LIFT's Subverting Economics panel at the Euclid Theatre 4/97; From the production of FAVA member Shreela Chakrabarty's feature *Marriage and Chocolate* 01.



#### Video Verite cont'd

12-23rd St. E.-3rd Floor, Saskatoon, SK S7K 0H5

t 306.652.5502

<videoverite@sk.sympatico.ca> [www.videoverite.org](http://www.videoverite.org)

#### Winnipeg Film Group

Winnipeg has been a landmark in Canada's co-op landscape since the Film Group formed in 1974. "Winnipeg has no film school at this time," says WFG's Production Coordinator, Brendon Sawatsky. "We have a proven curriculum." He's referring to the "Basic Workshop," an in-demand series of film classes which covers scriptwriting, camera, editing, and more. They also run the Cinematheque Theatre, whose screenings are "95 per cent Canadian," according to Sawatsky. "If people are aware, all else will fall into place. There's got to be support in the community."

304-100 Arthur St., Winnipeg, MB R3B 1H3

t 204.925.3456 f 204.942.6799

<info@winnipegfilmgroup.mb.ca> [www.winnipegfilmgroup.mb.ca](http://www.winnipegfilmgroup.mb.ca)

This is a revised version of an article which originally appeared in *Broken Pencil*, the magazine of zine culture and the independent arts. If you are interested in having your work reviewed in the magazine, contact [video@brokenpencil.com](mailto:video@brokenpencil.com) or send a VHS cassette with contact information to: *Broken Pencil*, PO Box 203, Station P, Toronto, ON, M5S 2S7. Sample copies are \$5 and can be ordered by mail or on the website: [www.brokenpencil.com](http://www.brokenpencil.com)



## LIFT Information

### Membership

The Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto (LIFT) is a not for profit, artist run film co-op which supports and encourages independent filmmaking through the exchange of information and access to equipment and facilities. Membership is open to anyone interested in the co-op and its activities.

Affiliate Membership >\$50/year (no rental privileges)

Associate Membership >\$60/year + volunteer hours

Full Membership >\$120/year + volunteer hours

### Staff

Malcolm Rogge >Executive Director <execdir@istar.ca>

Deanna Bowen >Communications Coordinator

Roberto Ariganello >Technical Coordinator

Christina Battle >Technical Coordinator

Jesse van der Schaaf >Office and Membership Coordinator

Larissa Fan >Newsletter Editor <fanburke@interlog.com>

Franci Duran >Newsletter Designer

### Board of Directors

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Design >fduran productions >Franci Duran

Contributors >Daniel Cockburn >Jonathan Culp

Proofreading and Editorial Assistance >Christina Battle >Malcolm Rogge

Program Notes >Barbara Goslawski (present) >Susan Oxtoby (past)

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