



*The
film
Girl
From
Moush
by
Gariné
Torossian
is a poetic
montage of
the artist's
journey
through her
subconscious
Armenia.*

*It is
one
of
fourteen
films by
LIFT
members
to be
screened
at the
1993
Festival of
Festivals.*

*See details
inside.*



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august 1993
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with much appreciated effort from

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*Still shot off the
steinbeck from
City of Tongues
by Lewis Cohen,
soon to be released.*

THE LIAISON OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS OF TORONTO is a non-profit co-op 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 matter.

LIFT is supported by its membership, The Canada Council (media arts section), The Ontario Arts Council, Metro Toronto Cultural Affairs Division, The City of Toronto through the Toronto Arts Council, The National Film Board of Canada, Telefilm, The Ontario Film Development Corporation, The Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Culture and Communications.

Articles published in the LIFT newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, the Co-op or members of the Board of Directors. Letters to the editor can be sent c/o LIFT, 345 Adelaide St. W., Toronto, Ontario M5V 1R5. Phone: 596-8233. Fax: 596-8413.

For information regarding the Racial Equity Fund, call 596-6749.

Internal Design by Kika, with
Naqaba, Milinda and Daniela
getting in on the act.

Welcome new LIFT

members:

Pat Auge

Russell Bennett

Isabel Blair

Conrad Coates

Clare Cullen

Richard Daley

Dina Del Zotto

Robert Deleskie

James Desroches

Michelle Gnutzman

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Kevin Shaver

Brent Sherman

Annie Szamosi

Hope Thompson

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Robert Vandenhoven

Alistair Vogan

Adam Young



news

New Grant Deadlines

LIFT

April 1st, 1994 is the deadline for the next delicious LIFT Production/Co-Production grant opportunity. In order to be eligible you will need to upgrade your membership to Full or Associate six months before the deadline, that is, by October 1, 1993.

TAC

The new deadline date for the Toronto Arts Council's 1993 Grants to Visual Artists Program has been changed to September 27, 1993. In previous years, the deadline for applications to this program was October 15. The new, earlier deadline date allows time for final approval of the grant recommendations before the end of the fiscal year. Professional Toronto artists may apply for the creation of plastic and/or time-based art, including audio art, electronic media, fibre, film holography, installations, multiples (bookworks), paintings, performance, photography, printmaking, sculpture, film and video. As with other TAC programs, residency in the City of Toronto is a basic requirement. (The City of

Toronto is a distinct area within Metropolitan Toronto and does not include East York, Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough or York).

OAC

The First Projects: Film and Video granting program was introduced in 1992 and there have been three deadlines so far. There has been an impressive response to the introduction of this program as indicated by the number of proposals submitted to the deadlines and the interest and support of the program from artists. First Projects: Film and Video recognizes an important stage of artistic development, the initial production of a media work, and it complements other production funds and incentives available to first time media projects. The Film, Photography, Video Office will now offer the First Projects: Film and Video program on an ongoing basis. Unfortunately, there has been no additional funding available in 1993-94 to increase the number of productions grants available through this program. Due to funding restrictions, the next deadline for the First Projects: Film and Video program will be March 1st, 1994. Applications for this deadline will be

available after December 1, 1993 and can be obtained by contacting the Film, Photography, Video Office or directly from the reception desk at the Ontario Arts Council.

Silent Auction Success

The Third Annual Island Screening took place on Ward's Island on Saturday 24 July. Thanks for all those who came out, to all the wonderful volunteers and to the filmmakers whose films were shown. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves, and we raised about \$650 for the co-op, too. Thanks to the sponsors of the event, the silent auction was a great success. It raised \$4,000 for the co-op and provided opportunities for members to access some amazing deals and save money. For those interested, these were the final bids on the items: 4 x 400ft rolls, Agfa stock worth \$480, went for \$230. Exclusive service credit worth \$100, went for \$50. 8hrs mixing services at Film House worth \$3,120, went for \$850. 5 x 400ft rolls of Fuji Stock worth \$520, went for \$250. 45 rolls x 400ft colour reversal stock from Kodak, went for \$160 a roll. Rental credit at Lightsource worth \$300, went for \$125. Service credit at Medallion/

P.F.A. worth \$200, went for \$110. Numbers edge-coding credit worth \$150, went for \$120. P.S. rental credit worth \$1,000, went for \$550. Rental credit of grips & lights at William F. White worth \$2,000, went for \$270.

Many thanks to Steve Mayhew at **Agfa Canada**, Greg Miller at **Exclusive**, Stan Ford at **Film House**, Daivid Cheng at **Fuji Canada**, Michael Zakula at **Kodak Canada**, Michael Rosenberg at **Lightsource**, Peter Campbell at **Medallion/P.F.A.**, Helen Brunjes at **Numbers**, John Feeney at **P.S.** and Bill White at **William F. White**, who all donated these items to the co-op for the auction.

And it's not too late to participate. **A last minute donation from Kinko's Copies of a \$100 service credit is still available. Call Claire at the office.**

We hope to repeat this event in the future and perhaps make it an annual thing so that members know it's coming and can actually plan for it.

Call for Submissions

Film, Video and Performance call for participation.

THIRD RAIL a visual arts festival in the King - Dufferin area.

third rail - n: an electric rail through which energy is led to the motors of a locomotive. Third Rail is a neighbourhood arts festival taking place on Saturday, September 25 and Sunday, September 26 in the King - Dufferin area. Artists

and businesses will be opening their studios, homes and workplaces to the general public for these two days. The event will combine the excitement of a block party with energy of Toronto's artists.

Planning is well underway! Site - specific outdoor installations, film and video screenings, tours of commercial studios and production facilities and live music are just some of the activities being organized. Deadline Sept. 5th. For more information call 532-6296

Short Cuts Productions is currently looking for **film and video shorts for an upcoming weekly television series.** Those submissions selected will be paid a fee for broadcast use and be eligible for prizes.

The main emphasis of the show will be on humour, but we are also looking for off - beat dramas, thrillers, action - adventures and animation. All films and videos must feature excellent production value (i.e. broadcast quality) and be original. We are primarily interested in short subjects in the one to ten minute range. Pieces of up to twenty two minutes in length will be considered, however, they will be subject to being cut for commercials at the sole discretion of Short Cuts Productions.

All submissions should be on VHS format. Included with the video should be all the particulars pertaining to the production including ownership and rights to distribution. Mail or courier your submission

to: Short Cuts Productions 169 Strathcona Rd. SW, Calgary, Alberta, T3H 1X9 Entry deadline: Dec. 31, 1993. VHS tapes will not be returned. All applicants will be notified by mail by August 1, 1994 For further information, write to us at the address above or call or fax (403) 242-3934

Lisa Brown of The Workman Theatre Project is looking for **film and video about mental health** for *Rendezvous with Madness*, a festival on the subject to take place during mental Health Awareness Week October 4th to 8th. It will be held at the Joseph Workman Auditorium, 1001 Queen Street W. For more information call Lisa Brown at 416 583-4339.

Pleasure Dome is always interested in receiving programming suggestions from its viewers. You can submit your ideas in any form whether it's a loose desire or a clearly defined curatorial selection. We pay artist fees and have honorarium for curators or visiting artists. Please call us at 416 516-1532 or write to 67a Portland St. T.O. M5V 2M9

Greg's happiness, our sorrow

Commencing September 10th Greg Woodbury, LIFT's equipment manager, is taking a six month leave of absence to put much needed time and effort into his own work. We look forward to seeing him back in March of 1994.

New Pre-booking Policy for the Arri SR

In the past full members could book the Arri SR six weeks in advance of their first booking days. Starting September 1st both Full and Associate members can pre-book the Arri SR four weeks in advance of their first booking day.

35/16 flatbed for sale

Call Greg at LIFT before it's too late.

NFB: New Initiatives In Film Update

New Initiatives in Film, a program of Studio D of the NFB for women of colour and women of the First Nations.

NIF Video Equipment Loan Program Update

Please note that the cameras will not be available for loan from mid September - to the end of October. They are reserved for the Film Institute which will take place this October. If you require a video camera for a specific period, your request should be made as soon as possible to ensure availability. Requests must include your resume, an outline of your project and 'proof of insurance' if it's going out of the country.

NIF Studio D, Box 6100, Station A, Montreal, Quebec H3C 3H5 tel (514) 283-9534, fax (514) 283-5487



SAVE OUR SOULS

An interview with Clement Virgo

by CHRIS ALLEN

It's 12:30 and the noisy lunch-crowd at The Stem will make it hard to concentrate on the interview; if we even get a seat. I know little more about Clement Virgo than what I read in the Canadian Film Centre bio:

Clement was a 1991 Summer Lab Resident at the Canadian Film Centre, and is actively involved in the Toronto film community as a Board Member of LIFT and The Black Film and Video Network. He wrote and co-directed the short film, A SMALL DICK FLESHY ASS THANG with 1991 Resident Virginia Rankin, and was assistant director and script advisor on GOOD HAIR, PRETTY HAIR, CURLY HAIR a short documentary by Andrew Davis. Clement is developing his feature RUDE BOY, which chronicles three stories that take place in Toronto's Alexander Park Housing project.

Clement Virgo strides in, and he looks like he sounds on the phone: medium-tall, broad shouldered, a little older than his twenty-seven years. That's two years older than

me. I'm hoping he can help demystify some things about filmmaking. While we wait for a table, Clement orders an apple juice. That's a good start. There's a table free now, right in the corner (Clement must have influence here). We ask for the French Toast, and it comes in moments, steaming. I lay my bias on the table. Every interviewer has something they already want you to say... I pick up my fork and consider what it is I might be trying to say. "With this piece, I'm looking for a Story. A Tale. Something different from the usual transcript off cassette. I'm going to ask you, ...if your life was a Story, what would the plot points be?" Feeling like I might be onto something, I press further.

"And we can talk about subtext, what tensions have been growing... Hey hey! And if

you're the subject, *who* would the narrator be?" He's gonna think I know alot about film. I pat myself on the back, we're flying now. "...And *where* are you by now in the plot?"

He takes a sip of apple juice, a bite of French toast.

"I'll ask you that," I say. "Later." Clement chews.

During lunch Clement tells me how he went into fashion merchandising after high school. Then he decided to study film at York University, but after a year discovered that he really *did* hate school after all. He left and concentrated on writing Rude Boy. He made a short film while at the Film Centre, SAVE MY LOST NIGGA' SOUL. It's been selected to screen in the Festival of Festivals. "It's a fable about brothers," croons the narrator in the stand-up comedy/stream-of-consciousness sequence that opens the film, "...Caine and Abel. A couple of guys I live with on the dark side

still from
**Save My Lost
Nigga' Soul**
Clement Virgo
1993

of Eden."

As Clement cleans his plate, I get out my tape recorder. He's warming up on the subject of the Film Centre. "I sort of talked my way into making them give me the chance to make a film," he says, hooking my antique lavalier microphone to his white shirt. "So I've just been scheming my way into getting the things that I want, basically."

I press record...

Chris Allen: Are you a schemer?

Clement Virgo: Am I a schemer? I think the nature of filmmaking is that filmmakers are basically hustlers ... if you want to get your film made you have to hustle the things that you need, you know? Hustle the money. Try to hustle the crew. Hustle up a script. Try to convince people to give you stuff for free. Try to convince them that your script is brilliant and that the film's gonna be great. You have to manipulate, scheme, blackmail, sweet-talk and seduce people into getting your film made.

A: What motivates you to do all that?

V: Well, to make a film takes so much energy, and by the end of it, once you've shot it and edited it, you're sick of it, because you've lived with it so long but the

If you don't love it, you can't put out the energy for it.

A: Do you have any other metaphors you use to describe filmmaking to help you keep doing it?

V: Well, I'm a huge baseball fan, I love baseball, and right now I feel like I'm in Triple A. You know what that is? Triple A is the league just before you get into the Majors - I feel like I'm in Triple A learning how to hit the curve ball.

A: Why the curve ball? You feel you've mastered the easy stuff?

V: Well no, I think that it's an ongoing process of learning. But I feel that I love it so much that it's easy for me to learn. And hopefully one day I'll be ready for the show, you know? For the Major Leagues.

A: How do you feel about money?

V: My feeling about money always fluctuates, depending on how much I have at that particular time. When I have no money, money is the most important thing in my life. What I mean by money is I have enough to go out and rent a movie, go to dinner, you know what I mean? Buy a brand new VCR, things like that. Pay my rent. But when I don't have any money, it becomes the most important thing in the world, and everything else pales in comparison. And then my biggest concern

nice TV, plenty of apple juice in the fridge, money to go to a book store and buy any book I want, you know, enough money to maybe go away every couple of months if I feel like it, things like that. Having a Mercedes Benz is not that big a deal for me. But I wouldn't mind having a Pathfinder ... Pathfinders I like.

A: So you can travel?

V: Yeah, just so I can have a nice sound system driving down the street. (Laughs) I like the Pathfinders, they seem a very practical sort of vehicle, you know? If you ever lose your apartment you could live in it for a while. It has some practical use, you know?

A: During lunch I noticed that's a major word in your vocabulary—what is it about practicality that you value?

V: I think you come out of your early twenties idealizing, and, once you move into your mid twenties, your late twenties, you start to think about things on a simple level. Things become complicated, so you try harder to get a grasp.

One of my goals is to educate myself so I can have a better grip. I look for clarity and practicality, you know, because the older you get the more confusing things are.

A: So you're talking about kinds of knowledge, ways of looking that are

I'm a huge baseball fan, I love baseball, and right now I feel like I'm in Triple A. You know what that is? Triple A is the league just before you get into the Majors - I feel like I'm in Triple A learning how to hit the curve ball.

good thing is that, to spend six months, a year, two years making a film you have to love it. And if you love it you'll do anything to get it done. So that's what motivates me. Filmmaking sort of fluctuates between excitement, and depression, questioning, and doubting; from being really confident, to being really insecure about the work. You go through a wide range of feelings. But when you care about something that's what happens.

A: Sounds like a love affair.

V: To make a film it has to be a love affair.

is, like ... June 26, and rent is due in five days ... you know what I mean?

As I get older too, I see people around me that I love, like my family and being in this country I think one day it will be nice to have enough money so that my parents' coming to this country wouldn't have been in vain, you know what I mean? So ... I think that's a major challenge to somehow try to do something that you love, and get enough money so that you can take care of the people that you love.

But for me personally, as long as I have a

practical?

V: Yeah. We have ways of looking at things that are reasonable and practical. I don't think of myself as terribly complicated, or complex. I'm constantly seeking to make sense of it all, and if I can latch onto something that seems like it makes any kind of sense, it's great, you know what I mean? Now, Baseball I understand. (Laughs) A lot of people will look at that game and it makes no sense at all, but once you watch it long enough, and you know it, it makes complete sense.

A: Do you feel the same way about stories or film? Do you have any favourite films that you watch over and over again?

V: Well, I look at favourite directors. Certain films I watch over and over again, cause they're just so ... form and content mesh perfectly. I like Rumblefish, just for the style of it. Maybe because I know the story behind the making of the film - Coppola directed The Outsiders six weeks before Rumblefish. He made them back to back, and to look at The Outsiders and look at Rumblefish, you'd think a completely different person made these movies. But they're exactly the same actors in both films! I just like the film because it's such a stylistic tour de force, it also has such emotional truth, for me, at times.

Films like Drugstore Cowboy, that are trying to discover a higher truth, while you feel the filmmaker is searching, all the way through; that's the sort of thing I like.

When I wrote this short film, I wrote it out of my own experiences. I write in a circle almost. I ask myself how can I make this thing round, you know? It's like looking at a white page and there's just something ... like watching somebody clean a window, and then if you see them miss a spot, and there's a smear, it drives you crazy! You think, "Clean that smear, can't you see that there's a big huge smear right there? What's a matter with you?" So, the way I approach a script is to try to, within 25 pages, that's what a short film is, see if I can make it as clean as possible without making any smears. And if there's a smear, then I try to rub it out to create a balance. Trying to take the black dot off the white page, you know what I mean? Creating a sense of balance and harmony, of pacing and rhythm, and that's sort of how I approach things. If I look at something, any sort of music, or art, or whatever, I try to find the balance in it. Try to find the harmony in it. And if it's not in harmony, it's like that smear on the window.

A: Have you seen any films recently where you just wanted to reach out and wipe that smear off the screen?

V: Well, I think a lot of Hollywood films ...



Save My Lost Nigga' Soul
by Clement Virgo
1993

as you're writing you think the spoken word is everything, it's sacred. But once you get into the editing room, once you've shot it, you think Agh, why is everybody talking so much, shut the fuck up!

You know what, I might get in trouble for saying this... well, (laughs) maybe I won't say it. This is for independent filmmakers, and, you know ...

A: I don't have to put it in.

V: I can't really think of any one film. I just feel, if I watch something and it's out of whack, you know, off balance, I feel like the filmmaker doesn't have a command of what he or she is saying. I can usually tell quite early. It shows, you know? It shows from the third shot.

A: And as a viewer you lose trust.

V: Yeah, cause you wanna be in good hands, and you sense that you're not. You feel like the person's trying to, um, ... whack off, basically, on film. I saw a film recently called "Posse", which has huge smears all over it. The whole film is one big smear. The filmmaker thought it was okay just to put black people in Western outfits and shoot them, put them on film, and he would pull a lot of fancy tricks, you know, crane shots ... that somehow you could dazzle 'em for two hours.

But people are sophisticated, they see crane shots every day on MUCH MUSIC, fancy camera tricks, you know what I mean? But to say something that is worthwhile is difficult.

A: So where do you find your subject matter?

V: I try to write things that make me feel. As an artist you *know* when you write. I think, I'm fakin' it, but let me see if I can pass it off anyway. I try my best not to do that. But I'm guilty of it all the time. You know? I try to fake it. But I also try to be as true as possible to myself. And I try to find subject matters ... I try to tell a story in a different way, from my point of view, how I see the story. There's nothing you could tell someone that they haven't heard about already, you know what I mean? That's the difficult part. Coming up with an inventive way to tell the same old tired story. I mean, how many films have you seen about roommates? You know what I mean? Tons. Tons.

A: So how do you go about finding that original way of telling that story? Without

being derivative?

V: Well it's a very difficult thing not to say that my film is completely original I mean, I can't say that anymore. After about six months you just sort of lose all perspective. But you just try to find an "In". Once I decided, okay I'm gonna tell this story through this stand up routine... that was my "IN" You know? And once I did that, everything else just became easier.

A: That was what got me into the film too, as a viewer. Dean Marshall's rhythm was so intoxicating and seductive, he gave me everything I needed just at the right time, he was always there. And I trusted him going into the film. And that's what sucked me right into the story.

V: I wanted to grab people right from the get go. And I think that a stand-up routine... that stand-up comics, even if they're bad stand up comics, you have to listen to them anyway. Just to hear how bad they really are. You know what I mean? If they're good, that's a plus but you can get joy out of just seeing how bad they are. (he laughs)

A: It's win/win ... With RUDE BOY, are you try to find that same "In"?

V: Yeah, I'm trying to find an "In" and I think I found it. It's a difficult thing to try to find fresh ways to tell a story, you know. A very difficult thing. That's why I like filmmakers like Gus Van Sant, filmmakers who try to push the boundaries of storytelling, take chances on different ways to tell a story.

A: I remember right from the start being blown away by the editing in Save My Lost Nigga' Soul, at what point in your writing do you start to think about those sorts of juxtapositions, or jumps ... or telling it with the cut?

V: Well, it's funny, as you're writing you think the spoken word is everything, it's sacred. But once you get into the editing room, once you've shot it, you think Agh, why's everybody talking so much, shut the fuck up! You know? And I find I always take all these wonderful, wonderful, witty lines that I wrote, and throw them out, so that I get to the crux of what I'm trying to

say.

I think about that even when I'm writing the script. I have one working draft where I just scribble ideas in the margins for when I shoot the film, person walks across the room and picks up XYZ, you know? So I don't forget it.

A: Where do you do a lot of your creative work?

V: I think when you write as a filmmaker you're always doing it. When I'm dreaming. Even when I'm sitting here talking to you, just from talking I have other ideas come to me. It's not all of a sudden when I sit down in front of a computer. It's like building a house, you accumulate materials so that you have enough to build with. It's a constant process. Before I even write a script it's finished. In my head. Before I even start writing it's done! You know what I mean? Cause you spend so much time thinking about it, and you take notes to yourself, and you get ideas for dialogue...

I don't know how other filmmakers work, but it's usually done before I even put pen to paper.

A: To what extent is it done? How is it shaped in your head?

V: Just ... the narrative flow.

A: Do you see it in terms of scenes?

V: Yeah, usually the scenes are all worked out. And sometimes, in the act of writing I'll come up with a line and that will inspire another scene, somehow, like a domino effect you get one good idea and that spawns, another twenty. It's a momentum. A hot streak! It's like being a hockey player where one day everything you shoot toward the net goes in. Like being a baseball player and for six games you hit, like, 500!

A: And you never wash your shirt...

V: Yeah! And everything that you see ... you can hit! Sometimes I go through a drought where I can't even spell my name at the front of the script. I'm in a real slump. Like everything else in life, it's a balance between finding those moments and waiting for them to come.

A: Do you have a strategy for getting into those moments, getting into those states?

V: Well I think it's like if you lose practice

with something, you go back to the basics. You go back, you watch films, you read film books, you talk to people. You sort of ... get yourself game ready. Baseball metaphors come easy, cause, you know, that's the way I am.

A: But there is a time when you do sit down with the story juggled around in your head...

V: Yeah, you reach the point where you gotta put it all down on paper so people understand what you're talking about...

A: ...yeah, so what does your first draft look like?

V: My first draft is usually sort of raw, in the sense that the essence of what the film's all about beginning middle and end are all there. The essence of what the characters are is usually there. But subsequent drafts are sort of ... layering, putting other things into it, subtext, creating more of a depth to it. It's like, uh, ... painting a house. You put on a first coat, and once you have that coat down you say Okay, ready to put down the second coat ...

A: How is the second coat different from the first?

V: I think the first coat you just sort of slop the paint on the wall. You know what I mean/ And the second coat you make sure that it's correct, that it's even. You're adding on, and adding on. And hopefully you don't add on so much that it becomes a jumbled mess. You put on just enough that you feel that it's ... nice, that it's in harmony.

A: Some people I've talked to, their second coat is mostly a process of taking away. For me too, when I was younger (like, last week, if you must know) the first draft comes out all at once like a big splatter on the page, and you have to shape it and take out ...

V: ...yeah, it's a process of both ... my second drafts are usually more pages than my first. But it's a process of adding stuff and taking stuff out. Not everything that's in the first draft stays. But I think you know, once you have that first draft, whether you have something worthwhile or not. You just sense it.

A: How do you know?

V: You feel, Yeah, there's something here

A: Gonna ask you that big question about your life being a Story.

V: My life being a story. Well ... I don't know, if I was to make a film of my life, it would just be a two hour movie of a guy watching baseball games and videos, drinking apple juice, know what I mean? It wouldn't be all that exciting.

A: Were there any formative events that made you want to become a filmmaker?

reach. It's like going to space! You didn't think you would actually go to space one day. You know? Filmmaking, to me, was a mystical Thing.

But She's Gotta Have It demystified film for me, and that's what inspired me to try it. Sounds like a cliché, but that's the truth, man. Here's Harold (he waves) Harold shot the film... Hey, how are ya? I'm doing a LIFT newsletter interview ...

HB: The type of lighting we used, and the lenses, and the movement. It was a fairly demanding script. There was a lot packed into each shot, to carry the drama forward.

CV: Did you feel scared working with a first time filmmaker?

HB: No. No, I didn't feel scared at all, because Clement, in our preproduction meetings, knew exactly what he wanted.

The films we looked at, the styles we were going for, it was something that he chose. There were several styles that we wanted to bring together...

A: What were the films you looked at?

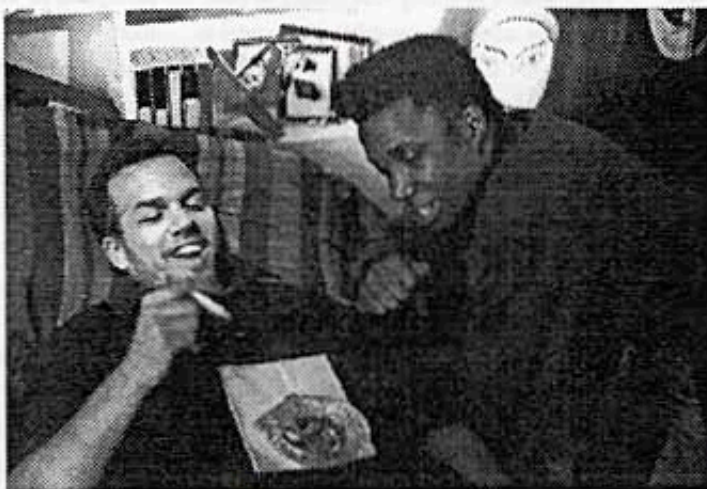
HB: Well, we looked at a lot of commercial, Hollywood films, and the results may not be apparent.

Just for a sense of movement, we looked at *The Color Of Money* we looked at how to free the camera and make it part of the expression and the character, without drawing attention to it. I think you follow the story, you get wrapped up in the story, without being blown away by the style. It's done for

dramatic intent. So we looked at films to see how movement was used for dramatic intent, and *The Color Of Money* was a great one for that.

We looked at a couple of Oliver Stone films for colour. We looked at *The Doors* and both decided that there was not enough reality, that there was too much gloss, that the filtration was too heavy on that particular film. But we picked up some other things from that film some of the hand-held

sequences at the party, and the slow-motion stuff. So we decided to go clean on the lens, and do all our colouration with gels. That was something I



Dean Marshall and Clement Virgo on set.

What's the first movie you remember?

V: In Jamaica I grew up watching a lot of Westerns, you know?

Westerns or, Kung Fu movies, were *The Big Thing* when I was growing up. Bruce Lee was King! Clint Eastwood King! Any one with a six gun and a horse was worthwhile watching.

I can't say that when I saw *Citizen Kane* it blew my mind. I mean, it took me six viewings to see what was so great about it, you know what I mean? But the first film that spoke to me, emotionally true, I saw myself and other people in it, was *She's Gotta Have It*. It was exciting! Low budget. Cheap. It wasn't all that great a film when you look at it. It's just that the energy and the excitement that went into it were quite inspiring. You know?

A: Was that the film that made you want to be a filmmaker?

V: I've always wanted to be a filmmaker, but filmmaking's like black magic. It's something you think is far out of your

(Cinematographer Harold Bachman and his companion, filmmaker Cynthia Roberts, sit at our table. Clement tugs the heavy microphone off his shirt and snaps it on Harold. He's up to something, I can tell ...) Clement Virgo: So tell me, what was it like working with Clement Virgo on this film?

Harold Bachman: It was great. It was great.

CV: What do you mean 'great', was he a complete asshole, what?

HB: He's a partial asshole.

CV: What's he like to work with?

HB: He was confident, and efficient, and well organized. He knew exactly what he wanted, and that confidence rubbed off on me.

We were going for something that could make or break it, and he chose to go the more daring route. I really appreciated that, because once we made a decision there was no holding back...

A: What was that decision?





wanted to do for a long time.

We picked a pack of colours, a range of reds and a range of blues, and some of those decisions were made on set, in terms of the scene. Like the seduction scene, we went for a cold blue, and I think it worked perfectly.

We were using a slow speed stock with very rich grain. That required much more light, and we had the lights available to us. Subsequently, I found out through Clement's film, that you can work with lower and lower levels with that particular stock. I think it has a very loose rating. I'm rating that stock at 200 ASA now, which makes it just as fast as any Kodak stock. Surprise, surprise you're working with the finest grain stock that gives you the best colour saturation and the best colour gradation. And it has complete versatility! So, you take chances like that and you find things out, make discoveries. And that's where I want to be working. I want to see things we have in our imagination and be able to translate them to film. Help enrich the story. And I like style. It's film. Film's a plastic medium, if you can play with high style and still maintain a believability factor, then I think you're achieving your purpose in film.

We wanted to get a wrap-around light that didn't look obviously lit. We figured out a way to light from the exterior through the window, and have that light the entire scene.

The colours are all over the place but they aid the telling of the story. I don't know the next time I'll be using a complete red as a key light for a fight scene, (laughs) maybe soon more people will want that kind of thing.

For me, it's really exciting to watch that film. It's a great story, very concise. And it's got a lot of mood.

A: Was there ever a time during the shoot when you lost confidence?

HB: I, uh, (smiles at Clement) made mention of the fact that... it was ambitious... (Clement smiles) and Clement made it very clear, on Day Two, that he knew exactly what he wanted, and he was going to get

Film's a plastic medium, if you can play with high style and still maintain a believability factor, then I think you're achieving your purpose in film.

every shot. And he made that clear to everyone on the production. And from that point on we just steam-rolled through it. It was a very casual, calm shoot. After Day One, the camera just fell into place. It placed itself. The set was so quiet that we were getting shots that we could see just spontaneously...

CV: Harold did a lot of that. Harold would say, Clement, look at this! and I would say, Great shoot it! Just little moments, you know? The actors would be sitting around and we'd say, Okay, roll sound... and after we stopped everybody would be like, What'd we just shoot? (laughs)

HB: Yeah, (laughs) and that's very rare.

V: And the great thing about Harold, too, was that he was always accessible, you know what I mean? I could call him anytime to look at locations. I think I called him at 11 o'clock once he was in bed or something and I said Harold, you have to look at this place! and he said I'll pick you up in ten minutes.

(Harold and Cynthia are at another table now, doing what they came here to do, eat. Come on, Clement. You can't avoid the surgical precision of my journalistic skills any longer.)

A: Is there any one subject that appeals to you right now?

V: No. I mean, I change. One week I feel one way, and the next week I feel another way. I write a script, and six months later I think - what was I thinking when I wrote this thing? I was a complete ... imbecile. And six months after that I think of something else, it's sort of ... you evolve as a person and as an artist it shows in your work. What you care about is constantly changing. You somehow mature or become more immature, you know what I mean? I think as you grow as a person, you grow as an artist.

A: Does that not scare you? To think that you can write something and believe in it, and six months later think ...

V: ... that it's soft? Well, yeah. It's quite scary. I mean sometimes you think ... you sort of question whether you think you have any hope of becoming a decent filmmaker. But that's the reality! I mean, my feeling about my work fluctuates all the time. It's never a constant thing. You just have to trust your gut ... that's all an artist has, instinct.



Desh Pardesh

by Daisy Lee

March 24, 1993. 3 pm
I was in the middle of transplanting my 7,985th tray of Inca marigolds in the heat of the greenhouse sun when I got The Call:
"Hi- it's me. Are you coming out for Desh Pardesh?"
"Desh Par Desh?" I asked,
"Is that vegetarian or meat? Mild, medium, or suicidal? Spring bar-b-q casual or dress-to-the-teeth caviar black?"
"D.?"
"Yeah?"
"You didn't eat yet, did you?"
"No...So do they have food, or what?"
"Of course! Desh Pardesh means "home away from home" - it's a celebration of South Asian "joie de vivre"!

It's one of the most cultured events of the year! There's gonna be films, videos, food, readings, eat-ins, dancing and singing, international guests...."
"Do you have to be South Asian?"
"No just come as you are."
"I dunno, B. I'm kinda busy here in the greenhouses..." I hemmed and hawed as I thought of my mother who would remind me that we still had a late batch of petunias to plant as I snuck out the door.
"They're having pakoras..."
"But I'm in the middle of transplanting giant, pom-pom marigolds, one of the greenhouses blew over from the big windstorm last week, there's glass everywhere, and I'm getting over a b-a-d

cold from running in and out of the greenhouses in the miserable weather", I reasoned.
"...maybe even your favorite eggplant and cauliflower dish"
"Maybe, or for sure?"
"If not, then I'll take you to Indian Rice Factory. Deal?"
The closest thing to Indian food in a small town like Queensville was my mom's cooking, and she only cooked Chinese. "Twist my arm. Okay. Where?"
"The Euclid,"
"Starts today, goes till March 28"
"I can only make it for one day, but all right - tell my mom I'm going to a seminar

on South Asian hybrids."
The petunias were going to have to wait.

As I slushed my way through the city towards the Euclid, I imagined the delicately battered cauliflower and thinly-sliced potatoes awaiting my tastebuds. My stomach rumbled at the thought of succulent, stuffed samosas on doily-decorated trays while fragrant Indian curry wafted through the theatre...

"Excuse me," said the envious, sooty-lashed woman behind the counter. "You're here for Desh Pardesh?"

"Uh. Yes. Of course... By any chance, would you know if they're going to have food here?"

She looked at me and smiled knowingly. "Inside."

I felt like a pig, but I couldn't help myself. I had travelled 30 miles for Desh Pardesh, which



had started to sound a lot like Dish by Dish to me, as I wandered around

and ate everything in sight. I started to notice that there were other people around me, mostly South Asians, eating at a more leisurely pace. They smiled at my graceless wolfing noises. "This is very good," I managed to spurt out through mouthfuls of pakoras mashed with chapatis.

"You're here to see the videos by Gitanjali and Mark

Haslam?...Or just to eat?" Replete, I said, "Mmph-gmph. Oh, definitely their work. Good food though." I waddled into the theatre without a backward glance. Now I could concentrate on the movies."

It wasn't like any other festival I had attended. Except for my presence, there was a classy kind of elegance to the proceedings and a genuine warmth from the audience that had nothing to do with the curry dish. The place was packed.

Gita's New View, New Eyes was impressive. It was a 50 minute video poem that she had made about her three month sojourn to India and what she had

seen and experienced there. The video had an almost magical effect on the audience. I even stopped munching. There were moments of awe-inspired silence at the India she was bringing to us on screen. It wasn't Hollywood- it was much better because it was honest and somehow, amidst all the grit, very pure. She managed to capture the humor and beauty of the people amidst the despair of their surroundings. At the same time, she gave us a rare and comic view of the west through her Aunt Sonnu and Uncle Pem's trip to Honest

Ed's, Canada - the epitome of western decadence for cheap. The images were beautifully shot, the humour was infectious, and her poetry combined with Sheila James' original score gave me goosebumps. She had the crowd on their feet. What impressed me most about Gita's work was its accessibility to a wider audience. Although I appreciate experimental work, I don't necessarily understand it. Maybe it's



my working class background, but my "smarts for the arts" is rather sketchy. New View, New Eyes managed to connect emotionally with the audience, despite its experimental form. I didn't have to pretend I understood it because I actually did. Maybe the food made it easier to digest. When I spoke with Gita about the reception to her at Desh, she was clearly pleased. "I made New View, New Eyes for the Desh audience. If that audience wasn't there, I wouldn't have made it. I

don't make work for filmmakers and critics or arts councils. I create for an audience at all times, and that means making work that speaks honestly to people on an emotional level. Even when I use an experimental form, it's important for me not to alienate the audience.... The audience is my God." Mark Haslam's video, a project that was done through Vision TV about Anglo-Indian identity, was a personal search for self-acceptance in harsh, Canadian landscape. It showed a young South Asian man coming to terms with the Indian side of himself after many years. The effects of colonization and racism had been one of

denial towards his Indian ancestry until he returned to Calcutta to explore his roots.

Perhaps what Gita said in her video is true: that in India, anything is possible.

Once you reach inside for those grains of truth about yourself, all kinds of things begin to change. You can sleep at night. You look at



yourself in the mirror and smile. You accept yourself and your history, so that you can move towards your future. You begin to look on the world around you with new eyes...You can eat without feeling guilty.

As I drove back to the petunia patch, I dreamt about Desh Pradesh and my South Asian friends that had been transplanted from their homelands onto Canadian soil. Their upheaval had created a wellspring of talent and culture for us to experience and nurture. It wasn't just the spicy food that gave me the warm and fuzzies. It was the idea of a community coming together to share their stories, their art, and their food with me. I went back to work with a new view, new eyes, and a full stomach.

All frame grabs from New View New Eyes by Gitanjali except the image below which is from Mark Haslam's tape.



Samuel and Samantha: The Emancipation of All
by Samuel Lopez and Jorge Lozano



ImagesTM of Emancipation

by Jorge Lozano

Images Festival 93 returned this year with a collection of films and videos of such diverse style and content that there was enough to satisfy the palate of anyone looking for an alternative to the sometimes predictable commercial cinema. One of the highlights of the festival was a retrospective of the films of Robert Frank. His films are an exploration of the beat generation and have become a historical legacy for all film and video makers who are forever challenging old video and cinematic techniques and the concepts of traditional linear narrative with different ways of "seeing". In this context, of particular interest was the programme

entitled "D'Ghetto Eyes" - a compilation of tapes by people from native, Black, Asian and Latin American communities which traditionally have had little access to the tools of film and video production. The works in this programme dealt mostly with issues related to acculturation, identity, race and assimilation as well as sexism and homophobia. The majority of works were both of high technical standard and aesthetically challenging. Reginald Woolery from Third World Newsreel in New York City curated the programme and it was Third World Newsreel who provided the technical assistance for production of several of the works. The videos

and films take on further significance when one realizes that in many cases the works were made by people with little or no experience at all. As a Latin American film/videomaker, I believe that this kind of work is important because it speaks from the inside about the artists' personal relationship to their own cultures within the context of a larger dominant culture. When many artists from Central and South American countries come here their lives suffer a tremendous change. The need for survival - complicated by language barriers - isolates them from the cultural life of the city. Many stop writing poems, plays, film and video scripts,



Creative Detours
by Bridgeste Davis

spending years working in factories or cleaning buildings before they become aware of the existence of artist-run centres, arts councils and other government funding agencies. Recently, cultural funding agencies changed their policies to provide access for communities which historically have had virtually no access to information or funds to create films or videos. Already we can see a change in the dominant accepted styles and aesthetics, as more people from diverse cultures bring different ways of thinking, seeing and feeling to film and video making. Efforts made by Trinity Square Video in organising workshops for women and people of colour, as well as the Racial Equity Fund at LIFT, have to be fully supported and ultimately expanded to include all artist-run centres involved in production, post production, and distribution. And it is only through the actual practice of making works in both film and video that we will begin to develop a style that is more in tune with what we want to say, that is, a style with our own internal rhythms, with our own aesthetics, our own language.

Jorge Lozano will present his latest film *Three Sevens* at the Festival of Festivals.

Black Images

by Nonqaba waka Msimang

Video artists of African descent served a rich platter of the old and the new during Northern Visions' Images '93. There was unique experimental work and a new twist was given to the good old docu-cum-drama. In *Whispers of Kisses*, Donna James, the Ottawa based artist, uses water as the space to contrast the beleaguered body politic with the independence of sea creatures. The body is also the subject in Kym Ragusa's *Demarcations*. I didn't understand it but the piece lends itself to a million interpretations. In *Positive Existence*, Toronto's Terence Babb cooked a rich paella out of television footage and drama depicting the black story. He held everything together with fence-high capital letters. Dawn Suggs' *I Never Danced The Way Girls Were Supposed To* was more traditional. The quasi documentary had the Euclid in stitches over questions of sexuality. For example, Suggs poses the question, "Do lesbians eat like straight people?" or something to that effect. Leah Gilliam from Chicago revisited the book "Black Like Me" in her experimental film *Now Pretend*. She asked a hundred and one questions on self, race etc. In *Thirty-Eighth Parallel* Reginal Woolery is disappointed by his father who couldn't come to New York to take part in his video about their relationship. Thomas Allen Harris' *Black Body* invoked the African Tradition of call and response and the audience was more than willing to participate. His focus of attention as the black man's body and the panel beating it takes from all sides. On the whole, all the films and videos broke new ground in exploring core themes: race, identity and sexuality in a fresh way.

The Festival had recently ended when I walked in to the Epicure café to catch the demise of the Maple Leafs in game seven against the Kings. "Whats that on your hat?" the bartender asked. "It's a Star of David designed to look like it's made out of celluloid..."

"What for?" she queried innocently. "The Toronto Jewish Film Festival", I explained. "The Jewish Film Festival!" she exclaimed! "Aren't there enough Jewish Films already?" she asked without so much as a hint of malice in her pretty voice. (It reminded me of when Pierre Peladeau, who owns the Journal de Montréal, said that he didn't dislike Jews, he just felt they were taking up too much room...silent nods all round...) "Far from the nickleodeons of the pacific coast", I began, "far from Studios scattered around the La Forum," I continued, "far from Harry Cohen and the glitzy immigrant dream machines... there are *other* Jewish Films...".

The bartender, eager to hear me spin my yarn of the far off, came to sit on my knee. "Documentaries about heroic Protestant resistance to Nazism from the french town of Le Chambon", my list began,

By
LEWIS
COHEN

Madelaine Ali
directing
Black To The
Promised
Land
1990



The Toronto Jewish Film Festival

"short comedies from the steam baths and bagel shops of Brooklyn, a feature about two Israeli brothers meeting up in the Promised land of California...: a gorgeous animated documentary about the Montreal painter Sam Borenstein: a docu-tryptich about the change in gefilte fish cooking techniques over three generations of Jewish matriarchs (from the wooden spoon to the assembly line); a previously unseen black and white Russian Feature about a commander in the Red Army who finds out she pregnant and is forced to shack up with a family of Jews..." et cetera, et cetera.

There were also films by non-

Jews, notably Donald Brittain's virtually perfect "Memorandum", which documents a Toronto glassmaker's return to the camps in the sixties. There was also an afternoon panel discussion moderated by Jay Scott which veered inevitably towards the Jewish preoccupation with the holocaust. Many of the festival's filmmakers were on the panel bouncing ideas back and forth with the audience and each other about remembrance, genocide, collective neuroses and the racism which exists within the Jewish community itself.

Films by Sephardic (North African and Mediterranean)

jews explaining the difference between themselves and their Ashkenazi (Northern European) bretheren; as well as films by black jews like Madelaine Ali, whose tragi-comic "Black to the Promised Land" opened the Festival to sold out houses at the Bloor, where all the films were screened.

Ali's popular documentary follows a group of 'troubled' black high school kids from Brooklyn to a kibbutz in Israel where, after much mutual misunderstanding, they live with, work with and befriend the kibbutzniks. Waterfights, picnics and dancing become *de rigeur*. Later in the film they take a day trip to the Holy City. The emotionally raw experience

of these Brooklyn kids at the gates of Jerusalem becomes a moving paean to the buried spirituality which exists beneath the easy rhymes of American pop culture. By the end of their trip the Americans have a real sense of kinship with the kibbutznikim which is only dampened by their embittered return to Brooklyn.

Above and beyond what the festival offered the community at large - i.e. some pretty outstanding docs, shorts and features - it also offered the Jewish community a chance to congregate en masse in a 'secular' setting. (I haven't seen so many *nachas* since the last purim party I was at in Montreal.) A healthy experience for a community that spends most of its time in 'parochial' institutions.

Debra Plotkin, Helen Zukerman, John Katz and Linda Bronfman organised, funded publicised and programmed the first and soon-to-be-annual festival. Their accessible, nervous enthusiasm rubbed off the audiences, festival volunteers and the Bloor staff who seemed to really enjoy themselves. (The theatre was usually full with the exception of the weekday afternoon documentaries).

The programmers stayed away from too much Israeli content, primarily because the burgeoning Israeli film industry tends to dish out a lot of classic mediterranean machismo, heavy on the marinated misogyny; but also perhaps because of the 'bad press' Israel's been getting for the last decade in the *realpolitik* tabloids of the civilized world.

The remaining soldier and terrorists end up bonding sporadically through World Cup Soccer (the Israeli and the Palestinian leader are both rooting for Italy), while butting heads over their political differences. The premise is good for a lot of poignant laughs and despite some relatively 'hammy'

soccer, their only bond, but the whole bloodied desert is mined, which makes the game more precarious than usual. That's life in southern Lebanon circa 1982 - the valley of the dead." The bartender nodded politely. She stepped off my knee and turned back to the tv. "Shit, did you see that cheap goal?"

The remaining soldier and terrorists end up bonding sporadically through World Cup Soccer (the Israeli and the Palestinian leader are both rooting for Italy)

Notwithstanding some of the disco-verite that comes out of the land of milk and honey (see "Tel Aviv Stories") there were nonetheless two outstanding features, "Summer of Aviya" by Eli Cohen and "Cup Final" by Eran Kikliz.

The latter was an anti-occupation feature which followed a group of Palestinian terrorists who return cross-country to Beirut with two kidnapped Israeli soldiers - one of whom is murdered along the

performances the film successfully scales down the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to a struggle between individuals rather than nations. A substantial dialogue opens up among the Palestinians and between them and the Israeli soldier. We find out about their domestic lives, their university studies, et cetera. But the state of war in Lebanon makes it difficult if not impossible for the 'boys' to enjoy each other. For instance, they want to play



The Toronto Jewish Film Festival took place from May 1 - May 5 at the Bloor Cinema

Cup Final by Eran Kikliz 1990

John Greyson ZERO PATIENCE Feature

AIDS, science, sex and homophobia are the targets in John Greyson's gloriously inventive musical. Explorer and sexologist Sir Richard Francis Burton has just completed a museum exhibit about Patient Zero, the Quebecois flight attendant accused of bringing AIDS to North America. Soon Zero returns with a vengeance — though in spirit form — furious at being so misrepresented. Burton and the ghost reach an uneasy truce, both working to disprove the science of blame. Fast-paced, provocative, and with a deeply emotional conclusion, ZERO PATIENCE is a film of great imagination from one of this country's most original filmmakers. (F of F)

David Weaver NO MYSTERY

25 mins. PC Program 3
NO MYSTERY is a cool psychodrama in the style of David Mamet. An ordinary office shmoe is seduced by a glamorous femme fatale at an airport bar and gets his pocket

voices, and a bottle of red. Expertly made, this memoir is Sanguedolce's hymn to his family, and his own secret history of the 70's. (F of F)

Clement Virgo SAVE MY LOST NIGGA' SOUL

24 mins. PC Program 4
Three black men, three private conflicts. In one of the most accomplished short dramas in years, Virgo delves deep into the pleasures and torments of two brothers and one crazed observer of humanity, all living together "on the dark side of Eden." Filtered through the manic, rap-wise voice of its protagonist, the film's dialogue crackles, each frame pulses with energy, and crises build to an astonishing, desperate climax. (F of F)

Gariné Torossian GIRL FROM MOUSH

6 mins. PC Program 5
GIRL FROM MOUSH collides traditional images of Armenian countryscapes with a haunting voiceover, rich in memory and longing. Garine Torossian's cut-and-paste technique



still from
SWEETBLOOD
by Steve Sanguedolce
1993



LIFT FILMS AT THE 1993

picked in the process. But the seemingly petty theft takes on chilling overtones as the thief becomes obsessed with knowing more and more about her victim. (F of F)

Steve Sanguedolce SWEETBLOOD

13 mins. PC Program 4
An avalanche of family photos, a collage of Italian immigrant

disassembles and rearranges the material of film in pulsating cubist style. (F of F)

Mike Hoolboom, Jason Boughton, Katherine Ramey ONE PLUS ONE

3 mins. PC Program 5
ONEPLUSONE clowns around with the boy-meets-girl tradition in this pixillated and strangely

frame blowup from
ONE PLUS ONE
by Jason Boughton, Mike Hoolboom
& Katherine Ramey
1993

Frame blowups from
IT STARTS WITH A WHISPER
by Shelly Niro & Anna Gronau
1993



tinted encounter between a man and a woman who tinker with each other's bodies employing a range of hand tools and vegetables. (F of F)

Mike Hoolboom
KANADA 65 mins. PC
Program 5

With **KANADA**, Mike Hoolboom ventures into the realm of drama and narrative without compromising his well-known experimental impetus. **KANADA** portrays a future world where our country has disintegrated; Lucien Bouchard has won in Quebec and Wayne Gretzky has been appointed Prime Minister surrounded by a cabinet of luminaries such as Hulk Hogan and Dolly Parton. News reports interrupt high level politics with updates on the ensuing made-for-TV war. Meanwhile two women attempt to find love and understanding in each other's arms as they dodge bombs. Brilliant performances by Gabrielle Rose and Babs Chula make **Kanada** a must see. (F of F)

counselled by ancestral spirits, Elijah Harper and three irrepressible cut-up aunts who take her on a mythic journey to Niagara Falls. (F of F)

10 X 10

To mark one decade of Perspective Canada programs, a series called "10 X 10" will be a feature of this year's festival. Ten programmers involved with Perspective Canada over the past ten years selected their favourite films which they felt have been previously overlooked or underscreened. The LIFT film selections include:

Ed Ackerman
PRIMITTI TOO TAA

Primitti Too Taa is at the intersection of many forms. It is a playful concrete poem; it is primitive sounds meeting their typed representation. In memory of German Dadaist artist, Kurt Schwitters (1887-1948), the film's animation technique is influenced by Norman McLaren.

the many that were exiled in Canada." (Francisca Duran) In this experimental, autobiographical film, a young woman remembers and recounts difficult childhood memories of the 1973 coup in Chile when her family was forced into exile.

John Greyson
URINAL

A number of recent history's more prominent and deceased gay artists are mysteriously summoned to the Toronto garden of long deceased sculptors Frances Loring and Florence Wyle. Frida Kahlo greets Langston Hughes. Sergei Eisenstein shakes hands with Yukio Mishima. The reason for their summoning is the hundreds of arrests made in Ontario's public lavatories since 1981. In a campaign that customarily involves video surveillance, public disclosure and social ostracism, many of the province's gay citizens have found their lives summarily reduced to rubble. The mission of this august body is to investigate the causes, history and ramifications of this low-

FESTIVAL OF FESTIVALS

Shelly Niro, Anna Gronau
IT STARTS WITH A WHISPER 27 mins. PC Program 6

Designed to usher in the International Year of Aboriginal People, **IT STARTS WITH A WHISPER** follows 18-year-old Shanna as she embarks on a journey of self-discovery and reconnection to her community's traditions. Along the way, she is

Francisca Duran
CUENTOS DE MI NINEZ (TALES FROM MY CHILDHOOD)

"In 1973, General Augusto Pinochet launched a violent coup in Chile that overthrew the Marxist elected president Salvador Allende. Thousands were killed, tortured, imprisoned, and exiled as a result. My family was among

profile but pervasive form of official harassment. (F of F)

Gwendolyn
PROWLING BY NIGHT

Prowling By Night documents the harassment faced by sex trade workers in their crusade to promote safe sex. The film is made with the active



participation of 21 prostitutes in Toronto's Parkdale area. Gwendolyn is a stripper and part-time prostitute working in Toronto.

Helen Lee
SALLY'S BEAUTY SPOT

Centered around a large, dark mole, Sally's Beauty Spot ruminates on the notion of blackness. Obsessed with the blemish on her body, Sally tries scrubbing, washing and hiding the black mark but it doesn't go away. Scenes from the classic 1960 miscegenation melodrama, *The World of Suzie Wong*, explore popular conceptions of the interracial romance and underscore Sally's own questioning of the lotus blossom/dragon lady stereotype in constructions of Asian femininity and sexuality. A playful, incisive treatment of racial expectations, role-playing and kitsch in representations of post-colonial hetero-romance. Could it be love?

Josephine Massarella
ONE WOMAN WAITING

Questions of identity and subjectivity are explored in Massarella's quietly beautiful and minimalist *One Woman Waiting*. The fixed frame focuses attention on the pro-filmic: a desert landscape in which two performers interact in a mirrored tableau. There's no dialogue and the natural sounds and mystical music contribute towards a mildly hypnotic state.

ZOOM

by Daniela Saioni

Positive energies abound from LIFT filmmakers **Jeremy Podeswa** and **Midi Onodera**, both of whom have recently completed the production phase of their first features.

Jeremy says of *Eclipse*, "We're very happy with the rushes. We had a great cast, and I got everything I wanted on film." The LIFT co-production grant of services and equipment was greatly appreciated, and Jeremy would like to thank his cast and crew for doing such a wonderful job.

Midi sends kudos to "the best cast and crew ever assembled" for *Sadness of the Moon*. She felt the combination of fun and hard work on the set resulted in great footage and helped her finish the shoot on time and on budget.

Heavy congratulations to both of you for going through with these courageous undertakings; you make the experience of doing a first feature seem virtually painless!

Maureen Judge's NFB Documentary *And We Knew How to Dance: Stories from Women and World War I* is completed and will air this fall on CBC's *Witness* series. Having seen some of the footage myself, I can tell you that this film is somewhat special in that it might well be the only film ever made on this subject which takes a human approach to these important women.

Other LIFT members who have recently completed films include: **Lewis Cohen** (*A City of Tongues*, 59 mins.), **Darcy Hoover** (*Dinner's On the Table*, 80 mins.), and **Vince Natall** (*Playground*, 12 mins.) Congratulations to **Steve**

Sanguedolce and **Mike Hoolbloom** who received the prize for Best Short Experimental Film at the 1993 Oberhausen Film Festival for *Mexico*.

Steve would like you to know that his band, *Sweetblood and the Hounds*, is up and gigging and will soon be appearing at a club near you. Fourteen LIFT films will be screened at this year's Festival of Festivals. As always, LIFT remains an important contingent in the Perspective Canada series. LIFT directors are contributing 2 out of 6, or one-third, of all Ontario feature films in the festival, or 10% of the national entries. In the short film category, we've made 6 out of 23 (or 26%) of all Ontario entries and 20% of the overall short film count.

Some LIFT classics are also featured in "10 X 10", this year's retrospective series celebrating 10 years of Perspective Canada. Current members have 6 out of 27 (or 22%) of the films in this series. It just goes to show you we shouldn't underestimate our influence as a collective.

More on these films in the October issue of the newsletter. See you at the Festival!

The **STORY BOARD**, a listing of all LIFT members' films in progress, will be returning in the October issue. Call Daniela at 537-2496 by September 20 to update your listing. As always, you can call in if you have any interesting news about your work.

A fairly well known director of photography, while speaking at Ryerson, described the worst conditions he had ever worked in: "it was a rock video. We were trapped in a freezing cold, unheated farm over a week-end, with only a bag of M&M's to eat."

He also said that he thought he would have been more productive had he been fed, and told to bring warm clothing. I tend to agree.

Well okay, if you gave me a few days notice that I would have to bring my lunch to the set, then you would not have to feed me, for I would have done groceries and would have something to make a sandwich with. But when I discover on set that lunch is not provided for me, or the make-up person, but is for the actors and the rest of the crew (who are all related to each other), I can't help but feel a little taken advantage of. Then I am expected to bring lunch along the next day. But by the time I get home, 11:15 pm, all the grocery and convenience stores in my neighborhood have closed. No time to shop in the morning because call time is 7:00 am, and it will take me at least 45 minutes by TTC to get there. Making a film is a complex project, one which can be quite stressful at times. Imagine making a film all by yourself, without a crew to rely on. Sounds like a sure way to earn an ulcer, palpitations, and a lot of grey hair.

Well, no one needs to make a film on their own, even if their budget is quite limited - for there are always people who are willing to volunteer on films in order to gain more skills and hands-on practical experience. Others will volunteer simply to fill time between paid shoots. Freebies (low budget films on which the crew members are not paid, or receive only a small honorarium) often demand more work from their crew than union shoots do. On freebies, crew members often work at more than one position. For instance, freebies usually only have one camera assistant who performs the duties of the first camera assistant (focus puller), the second camera assistant (clapper/loader), and the trainee, (person who replaces the second on set while the second is loading, and who also carries a lot of the equipment). Since freebies have such low budgets, the production company can not afford to rent the equipment for very long. As a result, the production shoots for fewer, but much longer days - such as 18 hours instead of 12 or 14 per day. Despite long days, and the hard work, freebies can usually be rewarding experiences. No one would agree to work for free if their were no benefits involved. However, certain freebies fit in the "FREEBIES FROM HELL" category. One freebie shoot did not only fail to feed me, but also expected me to pay for the \$50 worth of camera tape and

canned air I needed to do my job properly on their production. On other shoots the director will ask if s/he can borrow your car. (Luckily, I don't have one) In other cases the director or production manager asking you to



feed me, at least

by Julie Ouelton

volunteer will demand that you are heavily experienced and that you do not leave the shoot for a paid one (should one happen along). By the way, for all you volunteers, my experience is that as long as you are not the DOP or an actor, leaving an unpaid film job is fine as long as you find a replacement. After all, shoots on which the crew gets paid help to pay rent and bills -- freebies do not. Finally, there are freebies that refuse to tell the volunteer the time commitment that is expected from him/her. I asked how long would the shoot go on for in terms of days and hours per day and was told "as long as

it takes". That kind of answer makes it difficult for a volunteer to make plans outside of that shoot.

It actually does not take much to turn a volunteer on a film into a happy and very productive crew member: a little respect, maybe some gratitude, and ample communication as to whether he/she should bring a lunch, whether the shoot will take place inside or outside, how many shooting days are involved, and until how late at night. Finally, don't forget an invitation to the wrap party (could you imagine working for free and not being invited to the wrap party? It happens). Access to a phone and washroom at some point in the day is also nice. Working as a volunteer on a film is usually a lot of fun, as well as being a great way to make contacts with people in the industry. For instance, I just finished working on LIFT member Midi Onodera's *Sadness of the Moon* as an electric. The crew was fantastic, and even took time to teach some of their skills to the less experienced volunteers. Interested in finding some volunteers to work on your film? Then come down to LIFT and take a peek at the crew list. Also check out the "help available" signs in the main corridor or post up an ad listing the crew positions you're seeking to fill.

hello, dear readers.

Now that the Euclid's closed, bicycle riding has lost its anarchic appeal and I can't have sex in the park without Christina Blizard's ghostlike presence, I feel Toronto the Good is a movie not so easily shook. The most blatant example of our nineteenth century morality is being played out at Metro Council. The Inside Out Collective Toronto Lesbian and Gay Film Festival have bared the breast of a homophobic suburban landscape. It was somewhat shocking to witness the ease with which politicians accepted charges of homophobia. This case of council overriding the arts council agreement between artists and politicians,



The December newsletter, aka. the TV issue needs your input if it is to become a useful resource. Thanks for just being you,
Kilaxo

is a dangerous move towards complete annihilation of the arts councils, there is after all a hierarchy to the process of eradication. The next issue of the lift newsletter should clarify this battle for those members who are not following the news. Meanwhile, in response to the realistic possibility of cutbacks at LIFT, we are going to have to sell more advertising space if we want to keep six issues a year. If you are interested in helping out selling ads - and making a 25% commission please call LIFT. Our October issue will be almost all reviews hopefully a fair blend of festivals that were at the festival of festivals and films which were not. We still need writers. Please give me a call as soon as possible. The deadline for submissions is Sept. 25th.

Have you tried to sell your film to TV? What happened? What are technical standards? Did you show on cable? How will the shift to world wide narrow casting affect us as producers? If you have any stories to tell, either written or oral, please let us know. &

grants

Canada Council

Explorations Program
Jan 15, May 15, Sept 15

Arts Awards Service
Arts Grants "A"
October 1
Arts Grants "B"
April 1, October 1

Short Term and Travel Grants
March 15, December 15

Film Production Grants
March 15, July 15, November 15

Ontario Arts Council

Film Production
April 1, November 1

Video Production
February 1, August 15

Artists and the Workplace
November 30

Toronto Arts Council

Visual Arts Award
September 27

Festivals of the Future

Flanders Int'l Film Fest. (Belgium)	Aug .25
Graz Int'l Film Fest. for Architecture (Austria, Dec. 2-5)	Aug. 31
Nyon Int'l Documentary Film Fest. (Austria, Dec. 2-5)	Aug .31
Turin Int'l Fest. of Young Cinema (Italy, Nov. 12-20)	Aug. 31
Abitibi-Temiscamingue Int'l Film Fest. (Quebec, Oct. 30-Nov. 4)	Sept. 3
Banff Fest. of Mountain Films (Alberta, Nov. 5-7)	Sept. 10
Leipzig Int'l Documentary & Animation Film Fest. (Germany, Nov. 25-Dec. 1)	Sept. 10
Sao Paulo Int'l Film Fest. (Brazil, Oct. 21-Nov. 4)	Sept 10
Armies and People Film Fest. (Rome, Italy)	Sept 15
Cairo Int'l Film Fest. (Egypt, Nov. 29-Dec. 12)	Sept .15
Golden Knight Int'l Amateur Film and Video Fest. (Malta, Nov. 24-27)	Sept .15
Maritime & Exploration Film Fest. (France, Nov. 23-27)	Sept. 15
Namur Int'l Short Film Fest. (Belgium, Nov. 16-21)	Sept. 15
Mannheim Int'l Film Fest. (Germany, Nov. 15-20)	Sept .19
JAPAN (Tokyo)	Sept. 20
Henri Langlois Int'l Film Fest. (France, Nov. 29- Dec. 5)	Sept. 28
Bratislava Int'l Fest. of First Feature Films (Slovakia, Dec. '93)	Sept. 30
Casa de las Ciencias Fest./Scientific Diffusion Videos (Spain, Nov. '93)	Sept 30
Video Danse (Paris, Dec. '93)	Oct. 1
Ljubljana Film Art Fest. (Slovenia, Oct 18-31)	Oct. 8
Berlin Int'l Fest. (Germany, Feb. '94)	Nov. 20
Istanbul Int'l Film Fest. (Turkey, April 3-18, 1994)	Dec. 21
Umbriafiction TV (Italy, April 24-May 5, 1994)	Dec. 31

Volunteers:
Come
volunteer
for the
Party of
Parties! We
need you.
Cars will be
helpful.
Please give
Angela
923 8646
a call if
interested

classifieds

Wanted: Looking for gutsy, intelligent & sensitive producer to work with me on film(s) about the subject matter - mother/son incest & female sexual perperatration. Call Brennus (answering machine) 421-5761 or write #1605 - 85 Thorncliffe Park Drive Toronto, Ont. M4H 1L6

Wanted for 16mm feature
Under My Nose, a feature length romantic comedy written by Paul Shoebridge : Co producer, Cinematographer, Sound Recordist, Actors; late 20's to early 30's (payment deferred). Please contact Paul Shoebridge #14 - 90 Kippendavie Ave, Toronto, Ontario. M4L 3R5 Tel 693-7559

I am a props person/set decorator with 3 years set experience in film and television wanting to get experience in documentary filmmaking. If you need help in research, running around, set work or whatever, please call me. Yvette Lang 534 9773

Looking For Feedback? George Brown College offers Screenwriters' Workshop, 12-wks, Sept 22 - Dec 8, Wed nights 6:30 - 9:30 pm Fee \$91.20 plus \$3 materials charge. For more info & hassle free registration, call Peggy Needham, (416) 876 2092

B/W and colour filmstock for sale by lift member. Brand new, never used. A 25% discount to LIFT members. Call Michelle Mohabeer - 596 8233 or 539 0076.

Wanted : Composer and sound recordist/editor for short (10 min.) experimental film. Please send resume, tape (composers) and any questions to: Bridget newson 1 - 176 Howland Ave, Toronto, M5R 3B5

The Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution Centre is looking for a Managing Director.
As well as writing grants and managing the organisation, the Director lobbies on behalf of the filmmakers' interests and acts as a liaison with the membership, clients and the film community at large. 35 hour work week at 27,500 + benefits, starting in October. Give them a call at 416 593 1808 or fax 593 8661 for more information. Written Applications will be accepted until September 24, 1993: Hiring Committee, CFMDC, 67A Portland Street, Toronto, Ontario M5V 2M9

LIFT MONTHLY SCREENING

Monday, August 30, 1993, 8pm
at Cinecycle, 317 Spadina Ave. (between D'arcy and Baldwin, rear entrance)

TRIPTYCH

Craig Thomson, 1992
22 min. Experimental, col. & b/w
'trip-(')tik/n(GK triptychos having three folds, fr. tri+ptyche fold): a three paneled picture or carving hinged together, often depicting a religious subject. "Consequently I rejoice, having to construct something upon which to rejoice." T.S. Eliot

DIAMONDS & GOLD

James Hurst, 1993
20 min. drama, b/w
Vincent, a petty car thief gets caught in life's downward spiral; his girlfriend kicks him out, his partner won't work with him and his drug and alcohol problems inch him towards disaster.

WAKE UP, WAKE UP

Iris Paabo, 1990
9.5 min., col., animation
A group of picnicking angels have trouble with military hardware in space. Multimedia, multiplane technique.

Still from
Wake Up, Wake Up
by Iris Paabo



MATILDA

James MacSwain, 1993
22 min., animated
An impressionistic portrait of a woman confined to a wheelchair. Through a series of five vignettes the history of her life unfolds enhanced by a blend of experimental and documentary elements.

DISCOUNTS FOR LIFT MEMBERS

Discovery Productions 15% discount on audio post production. Call #596-1149 for more details. **Exclusive** 10% discount on service only. Call Greg Miller at 598-2700. **Film House** 20% discount on lab fees on COD orders upon presentation of the LIFT membership card. Call 364 4321 for more details. **Kodak Canada Inc.** 9% discount (plus 2% for cash) on film stock. Order must be placed on authorized order form available at the LIFT office. Call Kodak, Customer Services at 766-8233 for more details. **Lightsource Inc.** 25% discount on light equipment rentals, 20% discount on purchases. Call Michael Rosenberg for more details. **Numbers** 15% discount on edge coding, 5% on editing supplies. Call Helen Brunjes at 941-9412. **Pathe** 20 to 25% discount depending on size of the project and other terms. Can also provide package prices for an entire project. **P.F.A./Medallion** 15% discount on lab fees for COD orders. Call 593-7201 for more details. **Soundhouse Inc.** 25% for services, 10% for materials. Payments must be made on a COD basis and sessions will be booked on a bumpable basis. Call 598-2260 for more details. **Sound Mix Ltd.** 50% off list price. For more information, call 461-2550. **Sound Technique.** Film and video finishing for \$80 an hour, master mixes for \$40 per hour and customs by the sound doctor. Call 778-4973 for more details. **Valis Video.** 20% discount to LIFT members on rental of video and audio suites. For more details call 971-6031. **Wallace Studios.** 10% discount to LIFT members on studio space rental. For more details, call 537-3471. **William F. White.** 50% discount to LIFT members for equipment rental. For more details call Bill White at 252-7171.

THE LIAISON OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS OF TORONTO
(L.I.F.T.) PRESENTS ITS ANNUAL

PARTY OF PARTIES



TO CELEBRATE THE L.I.F.T. FILMMAKERS WHOSE FILMS
WILL BE PRESENTED AT THE FESTIVAL OF FESTIVALS

SEPT. 3RD
AT THE
PARTY CENTRE

167 CHURCH ST.
(JUST NORTH OF QUEEN)

DOORS OPEN AT 8.00PM

TICKETS \$5.00 IN ADVANCE \$7.00 AT THE DOOR

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL LIFT AT 596-8233