



THE LIAISON OF INDEPENDENT  
FILMMAKERS OF TORONTO

JULY/AUG 1998 VOL.18 NO.4

# Macedonian Mamba

Filmmaking at the end of the millennium







**THE LIAISON OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS  
OF TORONTO**  
July/Aug, 1998  
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The LIAISON OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS OF TORONTO is a  
non-profit co-operative which supports and encourages  
independent filmmaking through the exchange of informa-  
tion and access to equipment and facilities. LIFT hosts a  
program of workshops and monthly screenings and it pro-  
vides access to information regarding funding sources,  
festival and grant deadlines and other related matters.

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

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

LIFT's website address is:  
<http://www.inforamp.net/~lift>  
e-mail: [lift@inforamp.net](mailto:lift@inforamp.net)

Anyone with suggestions or ideas, please call Deanna at  
the LIFT office, or e-mail: [Barbara\\_Mainguy@tvo.org](mailto:Barbara_Mainguy@tvo.org)

# editorial

*"Common sense is the set of prejudices  
acquired by age 18."*

-Albert Einstein

**ABOUT THIS ISSUE**

We chose to make this our "Back to School" issue and Tina Hahn, Sandra Danilovic and Marty Bennett have written about their school experiences. Like many others who did not attend Film School, my training has largely been through LIFT's excellent workshops, and at Sheridan College's Mount Forest Independent Images Filmmaking retreat which was magical. We haven't included it here because we're going to put it in the October issue, which is "Do it Yourself" - focusing on film-making techniques and a genre that brings the impulse back to a personal, soul searched vision.



THE ONTARIO COUNCIL ON ARTS AND LETTERS  
100 KING STREET WEST  
TORONTO, ONTARIO M5X 1C5  
TEL: (416) 977-8300  
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WWW: [www.arts.gov.on.ca](http://www.arts.gov.on.ca)



Filmmaker **Aleksandar Popovski** says "Look Out! Godzilla is coming back!" and Filmmaker **Darko Mitrevski** replies "No Problem, our boys from *Wake up Dead Man* will get him".

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On the Cover: Still from *Wake Up Dead Man*.



## upcoming festival deadlines:

FESTIVAL /LOCATION /DATE: DEADLINE: TELEPHONE: E-MAIL:

WEBSITE: *lines*

<b>Cabbagetown Film &amp; Video Festival</b>	Toronto, ON	09/10/98	8/21/98	416-921-0857		
<b>39th Brno Sixteen</b>	radicka 4	10/15-18/98	8/25/98	+42 5 42214625		
<b>First Prize Of The Cinema Of Religions</b>		10/15-18/98	8/25/98	0461/210288, 0461/210232		
<b>Casa De Las Ciencias Awards</b>	La Coruna	TBA	8/31/98	34 981 271828	domus@casaciencias-lc.es	
<b>Festival Du Cinema International En Abitibi-Temiscamingue</b>	Rouyn-Noranda, Pq	10/31/98-11/5/98	9/1/98	819-762-6212	fciat@fciat.qc.ca	http://www.fciat.qc.ca/
<b>International Festival Of Films On Energy</b>	Lausanne	03/11-14/99	9/1/98	41 0 21 310 30 90	info@fifel.electricite.ch	www.electricite.ch
<b>Japan Prize Int'l Educational Program Contest</b>	Tokyo	11/13-20/98	9/4/98	81- 3-3465-6199	japan-prize@media.nhk.or.jp	www.nhk.or.jp/jp-prize
<b>Toulon Maritime &amp; Exploration International Film Festival</b>	Toulon	11/18-24/98	9/7/98	(33) 94 92 99 22 / 98 20		
<b>Banff Festival Of Mountain Films</b>	Banff, AB	11/6-8/98	9/11/98	(403) 762-6369	jodi_mcdonald@banffcentre.ab.ca	www.banffcentre.ab.ca/cmcl
<b>Rehoboth Beach Independent Film Festival</b>	Rehoboth Beach, Del	11/12-15/98	9/12/98		beachrun@dmv.com jellingsworth@yahoo.com	www.rehobothfilm.com
<b>Golden Knight Festival</b>	Valletta, Malta		9/15/98	00356 222345 / 236173	macc@global.net.mt	http://fred.net/malta
<b>International Film Festival of Mountains and Adventure</b>	Autrans, Fr	12/02-06/98	09/20/98	33 4 76 95 30 70	autrans@alpes.net.fr	
<b>CSIF \$100 Film Festival</b>	Calgary, AB	11/12-14/98	9/30/98	(403) 277-1741	csif@cadvision.com	
<b>Torino Film Festival - Features</b>	Torino, Ital	11/20-28/98	10/1/98	39 011 5623309	infor@torinofilmfest.org	www.torinofilmfest.org
<b>Torino Film Festival - Shorts</b>	Torino, Ital	11/20-28/98	10/1/98	39 011 5623309	infor@torinofilmfest.org	www.torinofilmfest.org
<b>Cinequest 99</b>	San Jose, Ca	01/28/99-02/03/99	10/2/98	408 955 5033	sjfilmfest@aol.com	www.cinequest.org
<b>Aix-en-Provence Festival Tous Courts</b>	Aix-en-Provence	11/30/98 - 12/05/98	10/17/98	(33) 42 27 08 64	aixfilms@club-internet.fr	
<b>Henri Langlois Int'l Film Festival</b>	Poitiers	12/5-13/98	11/1/98	33 5 49 41 80 00	festival-poitiers@rihl.org	
<b>Festival International de Programmes Audiovisuels</b>	Biarritz, Fr	01/19-24/99	11/13/98	33 0 1 44 89 99 99	fipa@wanadoo.fr	www.perso.wanadoo.fr/fipa/
<b>Festival International de Films de Femmes de Creteil et du Val de Marne</b>	Creteil, Fr	03/12-21/98	12/10/98	33 01 49 80 38 9	filmsfemmes@wanadoo.fr	www.gdebussac.fr/filmfem
<b>Sig Festival 99</b>	Grenoble, Fr	03/05-08/99	12/20/98	33 0 4 76 95 30 70	autrans@alpes.net.fr	

Guidelines and application forms for this list of festivals are on file and available for photocopying (10c a page) at the LIFT office. As much as we'd like to, LIFT staff cannot take the time out to fax forms to members. Please do not ask. If you are unable to make it into the LIFT office, you will have to call the festival directly to request an application form.

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

# Save your Pennies!!

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Keith Cole wants you to remember to save your money for the fabulous **LIFT AUCTION** coming in the first week of September



# critical dates of dubious deadlines

## calls for submissions:

### NEW FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE HUMANITIES & THE ARTS

Today many scholars in the humanities, writers, fine artists and performing artists are giving form through language and image to the experiences surrounding death, dying and bereavement in America. The Project on Death in America (PDIA) wishes to encourage individuals from the literary, visual, fine arts and performing arts to use their creative skills and insights to identify and convey meaning in facing illness, disability and death; and to evoke and deepen our understanding of the diverse metaphors that shape the experiences of suffering, dying and bereavement. Three program areas will be funded: 1) One-Year Fellowships in the Humanities; 2) One-Year Fellowships in the Arts; and 3) Two-Week Interdisciplinary Institutes on the Culture of Death in America. For description and application information please refer to the PDIA website: <http://www.soros.org/death.html> Courtesy GEN ART

### CALL FOR PROPOSALS (San Francisco, CA)

New Langton Arts (NLA) presents works in five artistic disciplines: Visual Arts, Literature, Media Arts, Music, and Performance, as well as interdisciplinary projects that combine two or more of these media. Works presented at NLA include those which cross disciplines and challenge traditional formats; work centered on critical contemporary issues; work that is collaborative or community-based; work with few funding sources elsewhere; and work just beginning to find its audience. All presented artists are provided an honorarium, production funds, and professional, technical and administrative support. NLA presents one-person and group exhibitions of visual and media projects by local, national and international artists throughout the year. Proposals are reviewed by curatorial committees specific to NLA's five artistic disciplines. These committees, comprising working Bay Area artists, meet at least every three months (in the visual arts program, they meet monthly). All proposals must include a resume, SASE and documentation specific to the discipline (refer to submission guidelines for these details). Please note: with a large volume of proposals it may take up to six months for a proposal to be reviewed. Proposal guidelines are available by contacting: New Langton Arts, 1246 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA 94103; Phone 415.626.5416, Fax 415.255.1453, email: [nla\\_arts@sirius.com](mailto:nla_arts@sirius.com) Deadline: Ongoing. Courtesy of ARC Resource Letter

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS (Chicago, IL)** Founded in 1973, N.A.M.E. is a non-profit artists' organiza-

tion that encourages the investigation of diverse contemporary cultural issues through a program of exhibitions, performance, video and educational activities. All events at N.A.M.E. are produced by invitation or submission of written proposals juried by committees comprised of practicing artists. N.A.M.E. is committed to presenting innovative work in sculpture, painting, photography and interdisciplinary, multi-media visual art. As a general policy, The Exhibitions Committee does not re-view group proposals, traveling exhibitions or projects generated by outside curators. For more information please contact: The Exhibitions Committee, c/o N.A.M.E., 1255 S. Wabash, Suite 4A, Chicago, IL 60605; 315.554.0671. Deadline: Ongoing. Courtesy of ARC Resource Letter

### CALL FOR INDEPENDENT MEDIA WORKS

(Philadelphia, PA) DUTV-Cable 54 in Philadelphia is an educational cable access station broadcasting community, cultural & educational programming that represents a diversity of viewpoints not found on mainstream, commercial television. DUTV-Cable 54 accepts independent work for broadcast on an ongoing basis. All genres and lengths are considered. All programs are promoted in a bi-monthly guide *Crosscurrents*, distributed to subscribers throughout the city. DUTV also produces *Unquote Television*, a non-profit 1/2 hour program dedicated to exposing innovative independent short film and video. This program is currently seen on over 60 cable systems throughout the U.S., reaching approx. 5 million homes. *Unquote TV* is now accepting tapes for its 8th season of broadcast. Works submitted to *Unquote TV* should be less than 28 min. and either in 3/4" or 1/2" (VHS, S-VHS) formats. Eligible submissions to either DUTV or *Unquote TV* may include narrative, experimental, animation, performance, documentary, etc. For further information, please contact: DUTV-Cable 54, 3141 Chestnut Street, Building 9B, Room 4026, Philadelphia, PA 19104; Phone 215.895.2927, Fax 215.895.1054, Email: [dutv@post.drexel.edu](mailto:dutv@post.drexel.edu) Deadline: Ongoing. Courtesy of ARC Resource Letter

### CALL FOR ARTISTS (New York City)

The Puffin Room is a project of the Puffin Foundation, a non-profit organization that awards grants to artists, as well as other practitioners in the field of aesthetics who have difficulty producing their work due to gender, race, or social philosophy. All work exhibited through this venue relates to progressive political and social issues. Some of the preferred themes for future exhibits include Native American culture, racism, human rights, statelessness, and violence in the media. No commission is placed on

sales. With a few exceptions, this gallery does not present solo exhibits. For information on what to include in a proposal, please contact Carl Rosenstein, Puffin Room Director, Puffin Room, 435 Broome Street, New York, NY 10013; Phone 212.343.2881. Deadline: Ongoing. Courtesy of ARC Resource Letter

### OPEN STUDIO is accepting submissions from

artist to realize a project in any printmaking media with the assistance of our master printers. The program is open to professional artists with or without printmaking experience who wish to use any print medium to create works from traditional to experimental; one of a kind or multiples; wall works, installations or bookworks. The projects selected will be scheduled for between Sept. 1999 and May 2000. Benefits include: Master printer assistance, available and awarded on a project-by-project basis; up to two months free access to Open Studio facilities, up to \$300 supply credit; \$100 honorarium for artist lecture; participation in a group visiting artist exhibition in the OS Gallery - artist fees will be paid; some travel assistance is available. To apply, please submit a detailed project proposal and include what technical assistance will be required, preferred dates, 15 slides, a cv and SASE to: The Visiting Artist Committee, c/o Open Studio, 468 King Street West, Toronto, On, M5V 1L8, ph./fax. 504-8238, email: [opstudio@interlog.com](mailto:opstudio@interlog.com). Deadline: Sept. 15

### SHAMELESS SHORTS, produced by WTN is

after your films & videos. SHAMELESS SHORTS is an alternative 1/2 hour program dedicated to independent short films from Canada and around the world. Preference is for work 15 minutes or less. There is no submission limit, nor is there a pre-buying or development funding and license fees will be negotiated upon acceptance. Send your VHS copy of the work, along with any appropriate publicity material to: Liz Janzen, Producer, SHAMELESS SHORTS, WTN, PO BOX 158, Station L, Winnipeg, MB, R3H 0Z5, Ph.: 204 783-5116, Fax: 204 774-3227, email: [ljjanzen@wtn.ca](mailto:ljjanzen@wtn.ca)

### FESTIVAL PROGRAM COORDINATOR - The

Inside Out Lesbian & Gay Film and Video Festival of Toronto is currently seeking a Program Coordinator for their 1998/99 festival. Applicants must have previous experience in curating and soliciting works, and be aware of film by/from/about the queer community. A detailed job description can be obtained from their office at 401 Richmond St. W, #456. You may fax your resume to 977-8025. No phone calls please. The position runs



**new members:**

Welcome new members  
as of July 98:

- John Aspey
- Carl Bailey
- Adam Basquill
- Mark Benjamin
- Dan Bergeron
- Christina Bothwell
- Michael Caines
- Gayle Chapryk
- Alexandria Coldevin
- Barbie Cooper
- Anthony Cristiano
- Mark De Valk
- David Dobosi
- Brian Dressler
- Nada El-Yassir
- Nathan Fleet
- Marc Forand
- Dave Fulton
- Lily Graham
- Robert Homs
- Melanie Jeffrey
- Melanie Jeffrey
- Brian Katugampola
- David Lloyd
- Jennifer MacFarlane
- Jeff Marshall
- Michael Mills
- Krystyne Mirzudlo
- Lori Moggy
- Mark Mutos
- Andrew Nisker
- John Nurse
- Beatrice Ong
- David Premi
- Marciano Puppi
- Ryan Rigby
- Aubrey Singer
- Shannon Skinner
- Brendan Steacy
- Peter Sumadh
- Vito Tassielli
- Jon Thornton
- Tom Tsamis
- Dennis Tsamis
- King Yeung

**calls for submissions:**

from Sept. 15, 1998 to June 15, 1999 on a 3/4 time basis. The salary is \$15,000.

**CREW WANTED FOR WOMEN IN THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR.** This year's session will be led by Director Norma Bailey, January 16-30, 1999 at the Banff Centre for the Arts, Banff, AB. They are looking for crewmembers that are interested in working to assist the participants in building their on-set skills and better communication between crew and directors during the production portion of the course. Two studios run simultaneously. They are looking to fill the following positions: DP X 2, CAMERA OPERATOR X2, AD X 2, HAIR/MU X2, EDITORS X 2, SOUND RECORDIST X 2, BOOM OPERATOR X 2, SCRIPT SUPERVISOR X 2, GRIP X 2, ART DEPARTMENT X 2. Professional crew will be offered a \$75 stipend for the workshop days they are required, plus return travel, shared accommodation and meals at the Banff Centre. Volunteer position may be available. If you are interested in this opportunity send you resume & cover letter to CREW/WOMEN IN THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR, Attention Jed DeCory, Associate Director Production and Technical Training, The Banff Centre for the Arts, Box 1020, Station 28, 107 Tunnel Mountain Drive, Banff, Alberta T0L 0C0. For more info.: Carol Whiteman, Project coordinator,

(604) 913-0747, or cut2whit@addax.bc.ca OR Bill Bulek, MVA Workshops Coordinator, The Banff Centre for the Arts, (403) 762-6624 or bill@banff.org Deadline: November 20

**ACTORS WANTED FOR WOMEN IN THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR.** 10 actors are needed for this year's session. All must be ACTRA members or apprentices in good standing. Actors participate in discussions, improv., and on-camera scene study during this two-week intensive. They are looking for a broad representation of age, gender, geographic region, race, etc. Actors will be paid a \$75 per diem for the workshop days, plus room and board at The Banff Centre. Travel to and from the Workshop will also be covered. If interested submit photo, resume, VHS of your work & cover letter to: ACTORS/WOMEN IN THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR, Attention: Carol Whiteman, c/o 400-856 Homer Street, Vancouver, BC, V6B 2W5. For more info.: Carol Whiteman, Project Coordinator, (604) 913-0747, or cut2whit@addax.bc.ca Deadline: September 22

**more news:**

Join the **NEWSLETTER Committee** if you are interested in the direction of LIFT's Newsletter. Members receive 20 hrs for committee service. Call Deanna at the office to RSVP. Upcoming meetings (6:45pm @LIFT): Sept. 1, Oct. 6, & Nov. 3.

**LIFT'S PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE** is looking for new members! Looking for a way to make up your volunteer hours? Committee members receive 20 volunteer hours for committee service. Next meetings are Aug. 18, & Sept. 15, (6:15pm @ Future's Bakery on Queen). Call Deanna to RSVP.

**WORKSHOP INSTRUCTORS** - LIFT is looking for two experienced filmmakers to work as instructors/mentors for a class of 12 people who have no film experience. The workshop will cover all aspects of the process of filmmaking, from traditional equipment and practices to digital technologies. The workshop will be held on various weekends from **September 12, 1998 to April 17, 1999**. The course outline is available from the LIFT office. For info., please contact Deborah at the office. Deadline: **Friday, August 21**.

**WORK DAYS, NEED HOURS?** Volunteer for the LIFT Party of Party! Call Deanna @ 588-6444

LIFT has purchased a Linotype-Hell JADE 2 Scanner, and external ZIP drive for use in the office. Members can come in and book computer time to create promotional materials for their films or otherwise. The Macintosh 11ci has been upgraded to 32MB ram accommodate The scanner is accessed through PHOTOSHOP 4, and is capable scanning documents (colour or b/w) up to 8.5" x 14". The rental rate is \$7/hr, pending Board approval. Also, another Macintosh 11ci is available, loaded with Microsoft Word 6.0 and Excel for all of your word processing needs. There is no rental rate for this computer.

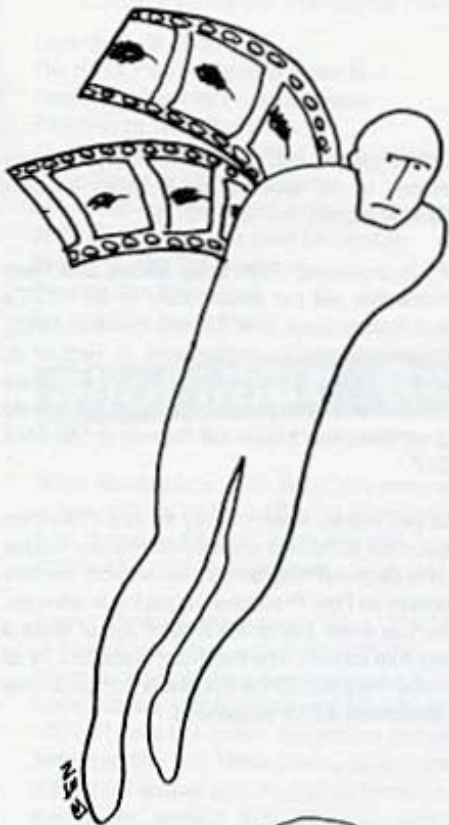


still from design Christina Zedler

**SUBMIT** your films for screening at the LIFT Monthly Screening. For more info. call Deanna.



**funding & grant deadlines:**



by Ben Akbari

**NATIONAL FILM BOARD**  
973-2235  
FILMMAKER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (FAP)  
09/01/98  
ABORIGINAL FILMMAKER PROGRAM ongoing

**BELL BROADCAST AND NEW MEDIA FUND**  
977-8154  
bellfund@istar.ca  
www.bell.ca  
November 1

**ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL**  
1-800-387-0058  
961-1660  
info@arts.on.ca  
www.arts.on.ca  
09/15/98  
FIRST PROJECTS: FILM AND VIDEO  
1/99

**TORONTO ARTS COUNCIL**  
392-6802  
Grants to Visual Artists (including Film/Video)  
SEPTEMBER 22

**CANADA COUNCIL**  
(613) 566-4414  
david.poole@canadacouncil.ca  
yasmin.karim@canadacouncil.ca  
**MILLENNIUM FUND**  
10/01/98  
GRANTS TO FILM ARTISTS  
CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT/PRODUCTION GRANTS  
11/01/98  
GRANTS TO VIDEO ARTISTS  
CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT GRANTS  
11/01/98  
GRANTS TO NEW MEDIA AND AUDIO ARTISTS  
CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT/PRODUCTION GRANTS  
11/01/98  
GRANTS FOR FIRST PRODUCTIONS IN MEDIA ARTS  
TBA

**BBS/CJOH-TV CONCEPT AND SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT FUND**  
(For all programming for TV)  
Janet Sandeman, (613) 274-4213  
NOVEMBER 1, FEBRUARY 1, MAY 1.

**BBS MCTV**  
(To produce pilots for primetime broadcast on MCTV)  
Keith Campbell 487-3770, Monique Johnson (705) 674-8301  
Quarterly deadline, apply anytime.

**JOHN SIMON GUGGENHEIM MEMORIAL FOUNDATION**  
90 Park Avenue, New York, NY  
961-1660  
http://207.86.8.66/index.html  
OCTOBER 1

**BRAVO!FACT**  
591 7400 x5815  
09/30/98, 12/21/98

**HAROLD GREENBERG FUND**  
956 5431  
hgfund@tmn.ca  
10/08/98, 01/14/99, 04/04/99

**COGEGO INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION FUND**  
416 977 8966  
ipf@inforamp.net  
www.ipf.ca  
11/01/98, 02/15/99, 04/15/99

**LA FILM COLLABORATIVE PRODUCTION GRANT PROGRAM**  
213 960 9460  
www.laiff.com.pgp  
08/28/98

**JOHN GUGGENHEIM MEMORIAL FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIPS TO ASSIST RESEARCH AND ARTISTIC CREATION**  
212 687 4470  
fellowships@gf.org  
10/01/99

**COGEGO PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**  
416 977 8966  
ipf@inforamp.net  
www.ipf.ca  
10/15/98, 4/1/99

**SOROS DOCUMENTARY FUND**  
www.soros.org  
PROJECTS IN PREPRODUCTION  
SEED FUND  
PROJECTS IN PRODUCTION OR POST-PRODUCTION  
THE PROJECT ON DEATH IN AMERICA (PDIA)  
<www.soros.org/html>  
ongoing



**liftgear & machinations:**

**What's new with equipment @ LIFT?**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

LIFT's insurance deductible has been increased to \$3,000 effective immediately. Members are strongly encouraged to purchase additional insurance in order to lower the deductible.

**EQUIPMENT NEWS**

**AATON XTR PLUS SUPER 16 / 16 mm CAMERA AVAILABLE FOR RENT:**

LIFT members are now the proud owners of a beautiful new Aaton XTR Plus Camera. The package currently contains: PL mount camera body with adjustable gate for 16 mm or super 16; 3-400' magazines; right hand grip; matte box with a two stage 4"x4" filter holder; 2.5" rods with 4.5" extensions; PL to Bayonette adapter; 4-NP1 batteries; and battery charger. (Each NP1 battery will allow you to shoot four or five 400' magazines.) We will be purchasing a super 16 zoom lens very shortly, but until then, the package will be rented at a reduced rate of \$100/day for full members and \$200/day for associate members. (Once the zoom lens is added to the package, the rate will be: \$120/day for full members and \$240/day for associate members.) The Zeiss Prime Lens Kit (9.5, 12, 16, 25, 50 mm) with Bayonette mounts, is compatible with the Aaton, and can be used for regular 16mm shoots, although the wide angle lenses will not cover super 16.

We have recently completed a **new Equipment Price List** which details all the accessories included in a package and more. If you are working on a budget, give us a call and we can fax you a copy. We also have a wonderful new **Technical Specifications Sheet** for both the Media 100 & ProTools Suites, to ensure that everyone gets the correct VITC, LTC, burn-ins, key code etc. Pick one up or ask us to fax it to you.

LIFT has recently acquired a **pistol grip, filter set and tripod for the Bolex camera**. The pistol grip and filter set are included with the camera rental and the tripod is available for \$6/day (full) & \$12/day (assoc.).

The Milliken DBM44 Hi-Speed 16 mm camera (1 to 500 fps) now has a T2 17 - 85 mm zoom lens with built in eyepiece and rents for \$11/day (full) and \$22/day (assoc.). Since this camera requires some special care, all those wishing to rent it must take an orientation (\$20/hour). Pending the results of some initial testing, the camera is available for bookings.

**Brand new** daylight balanced fluorescent light kits are available for rent for \$7/day (full) and \$14/day (assoc.).

The **LIFT Store** has found a new supplier for **paper & cloth tape**, so we now have the lowest prices in town.

- 1" Black or White Cloth Camera Tape - \$9/roll
  - 2" White Cloth Camera Tape - \$16/roll
  - 2" Grey Gaffer Tape - \$6/roll
  - 3/8" White Paper Tape - \$3/roll
  - 3/8" Fluorescent Orange Paper Tape - \$3.75/roll
  - 3/8" Colour Paper Tape (light blue, light pink, orange, yellow, red, green) - \$3.50/roll
- We also carry Kodak 7272 Print Stock, Splicing Tape, 2" & 3" Cores, Sharpies, Sync Beeps, Black & White Leader, Grease Pencils, etc.  
The LIFT Store is open Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., inside the Equipment Room.

The **Crew List** needs **Media 100 Editors, After Effects / Photoshop Gurus, ProTools Sound Editors**, and people who can shoot titles on **LIFT's Oxberry Stand**. If you have these skills and might be interested in using them on other people's films (for \$\$\$), please let us know.

The next **Equipment Committee** meeting will be held at LIFT on **Wednesday September 23 @ 6 p.m.** Help us evaluate the future equipment needs for the co-op. (You will receive volunteer hours for attending the meeting.)

The next **Workshop Committee** meeting will be in **September 9 @ 6:00 p.m. in the LIFT**. Those interested in joining the committee can call Roberto @ 588-6444. (You will receive 20 volunteer hours.) If you have any suggestions for workshops or if you have an interest in teaching a workshop please

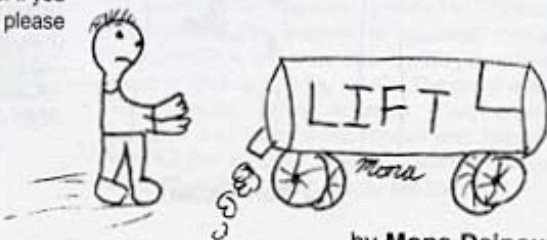
come to this meeting or call Roberto. (Send suggestions to the attention of Roberto: e-mail - lift@inforamp.net, fax - 588-7017)

LIFT is organizing **Film Loop Shows and Peep Shows** that will run continuously at the LIFT's Silent Auction (Sept. 3 @ Theatre Passe Murielle). We are planning to display work in Regular 8, Super 8, 16mm and possibly in 35mm. If you are interested in creating a loop or would like to help out with the show, please call Roberto @ 588-6444 ASAP.

**Did you know...** when you pay for your Production Equipment at the time of check-out that you receive a 10% discount! You can also benefit from the 10% discount on Post-Production by paying in advance. (You can either pay at the time of use or leave a lump sum on file.) The maximum credit limit for all members is \$300. Once this limit is met, all access to equipment will be suspended.

**LIFT Orientation:**

LIFT's orientation sessions will be on **Wed., Sept 16, 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.** for members who haven't yet familiarized themselves with the co-op. Call 588-6444 for more info.



by Mona Dejpour



**Congratulations:**

Congratulations to the following LIFT members whose films will appear at the Toronto International Film Festival

- Cupid by **Wrik Mead**
- The Endal Path by **Cynthia Roberts**
- Destroying Angel by **Phillip Hoffman**
- Faultlines by **Gary Popovich**
- Great Expectations (Not What You're Thinking) by **Ann Marie Fleming**
- In the Future by **Mike Hoolboom**
- John Scott - Social Art and Justice by **Michael McNamara**
- Michael in the Suite by **Neal Livingston**
- Moving Day by **Chris Deacon**
- Swell by **Carolyne Hew**
- Transcript by **Judith Doyle**

**Who/What Aug 98:**

Compiled by **Jon O'Connor**

**WE WANT PICTURES FOR THIS COLUMN!!!**

Even if you don't have a blurp ready, get a picture to the LIFT Office (make sure to clearly write/attach the photo credit and picture information to it). We want stills, on location snaps, video frames, graphics of any kind.

**Member News Submissions:**

Newsletter Committee member **Jon O'Connor, (416) 289-1517, jconnor@interlog.com**, has taken over the member news duties! You can email or phone Jon with updates and news of your film's progress!

pg > 6

**Witch Molodtsky's "The Brass"** has screened at two festivals and is waiting for confirmation from "salon de refuses". Mitch has also been optioned for a future screenplay.

**Keith Cole's** ten-minute dance video "TOILET" is part of the latest edition of OFFLINE - a National cable television series produced in the United States. The people at OFFLINE say, "TOILET uses live action, surveillance camera technique and late 1960s pornography to create a most spirited and unusual performance." Keith's film **NANCY BOY VERSUS MANLY WOMAN** screened at OUT ON SCREEN - The Vancouver Gay & Lesbian Film Festival on August 7.

**Manuel Neves** screened his first sync sound film "Repetition" on July 23 at Ryerson. The 16 mm, black & white, 4 minute film is about loving more than one person.

From the Popcorn Film Festival in Sweden to the Sao Paulo Short Film Festival, **Ruba Nadda** has six films which were completed in the past year and a half, and are now showing in festivals all over the world.

"The story itself depicts the community held belief that all queers migrate to cities" says **Jane Farrow**, producer of *Stairway to Heaven*. "Some choose to stay and party right where they are". The 25-minute documentary tells the story of gay steelworker **Bob Goddard**, who for

nearly 30 years hosted an historic string of gay basement parties in Sault Ste. Marie, Ont. **Allyson Mitchell** is currently editing it on LIFT's Media 100 and should be completed by October, and premiered in December in the Sault.

**Tamara Berger** has recently completed post on her super 8 film, "Mount the Man". It was screened at Carnival of Perversions, a benefit for the Come As You Are bookstore.

"Basically it is about power dynamics and how it relates to identity and consent," says **Deanna Bowen** about her recently completed work *Sadomasochism*. Shot in 16mm, the narrated video uses many forms of media to comment on the themes of sex, race and politics. The piece will be displayed in a suitable gallery space, presently being sought in various cities.

**Larissa Fan & Kirsten Douglas** are looking to November for completion of their experimental film "Temporary landscape". Shot in 16mm Colour and B & W, the film is about the industrial port of Toronto area and is presently being edited at LIFT.

**John Greyson's** epic/documentary/drama "Uncut" just finished a "fantastic" five-week run at the Carlton. The 92-minute feature about circumcision, **Pierre Trudeau**, and copyright was shot in Betacam SP transferred to 16mm.

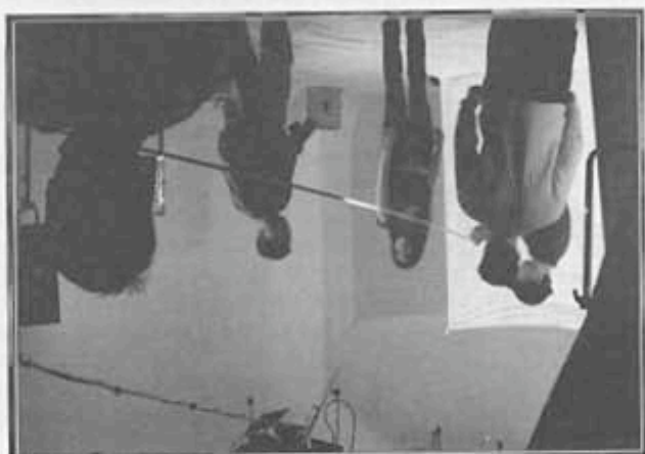
**Melanie Jeffrey** recently shot a test film ("Drew's") for a possible future project tentatively named "Missed". The experimental documentary will be about an artist friend that committed suicide, and was shot on Super 8 and 16mm.

On the Take - **Drew Lee** has finished his dramatic piece about superficiality (or lack thereof), the mid-20s age group, social agenda, promiscuity and jealousy: "The Take", an 11-min film premiered at it's wrap party 7 Aug.

**Michelle Messina** recently traveled to the Palm Springs Int'l Film Festival with her short film "Fruitful Sex".

**Julie Saragosa** is now editing her film "The Bead Wall", shot by Joe Turner (DOP) and Rob Mounjoy (Camera Operator). The 8-min, 16mm colour film is about a couple's miscommunication and is heading for a September completion.

**Carolyn Wong** is in the development phase of a project tentatively called "Ying Ying". It is a one hour experimental documentary about a granddaughter's discovery of her grandmother, after her death.



Perfect Jeans Commercial  
(L-R) 1st Cam Asst- Dave John, Director Yaron Gerry, Jeans Model Olivia Zielinski, LIFT'er D.P. Gerry, Foreground Silhouette, 2nd Camera Asst Gena Dower



# 16mm Black & White Film Stocks:

## Larissa Fan

Black and white film may leave some people cold, conjuring up memories of dry documentaries and overwrought dramas, but a beautiful black and white image on screen gets me every time. Not only can B&W film be amazingly beautiful, but it's extremely versatile -- in its original state it can be stark or dreamy, clinical or dramatic, then it can be manipulated and affected in many ways through tinting, toning, solarization and optical printing.

The look of black and white is not the only thing to recommend it -- for the budget-conscious, black and white film stock is on average half the price (or less) of colour, and processing is about two thirds. In addition, you don't have to worry about colour balancing, which can add up both in the cost of gels and the extra time it takes to set up. Unfortunately, Deluxe has stopped printing 16mm B&W (and colour) film, leaving B&W Film Factory as almost the only game in town for B&W negative processing and printing. (Exclusive Film and Video does 16mm reversal).

If you have decided to shoot part or all of your film in black and white, there are a number of stocks to choose from. I will be reviewing the most commonly used Kodak negative and reversal stocks, as well as two Kodak laboratory stocks which can be used in camera to achieve high-contrast effects. (I haven't tried the Ilford negative stocks advertised at LIFT, but they are worth checking out as well.) The following is meant as a starting point for selecting a stock -- it is always a good idea to do a few tests before making your final decision.

### Negative Stocks: 7231 and 7222

Kodak has two B&W negative stocks: 7231 Plus-X Negative and 7222 Double-X Negative. Plus-X is a low speed stock rated at 64 ASA for Tungsten and 80 ASA Daylight, suitable for all-round use outdoors or in the studio. Double-X is higher speed, 200 ASA Tungsten or 250 Daylight, useful for lower-level and difficult lighting conditions. They cost \$21.34 for a 100' roll or \$79.42 for a 400' roll, with a 9% discount if you order through LIFT.

Both stocks are relatively fine-grain (Double-X will be slightly grainier), with a wide exposure latitude (room for error is 2 stops over and 1.5 stops under, with exposure correction in the printing stage). In hand-processing, the emulsion is very sensitive to scratches and scrapes, and the film must be processed in complete darkness until after the fixer stage. You can check your film for a few seconds with a dark green safe light, but only after it's 50% developed. If you want a positive with the negative stocks, you will have to get a print made at the lab.

The negative stocks are quite low contrast, which for some subjects can result in a look reminiscent of old documentary or industrial films. If that's not the look you want, you'll have to find ways to increase the contrast. If you have control of the lighting,

you can bump up the lighting ratio -- try 1:6 or 1:8 -- but there isn't much you can do outdoors with available light. Underexposing by one or two stops and push processing at the lab will increase the contrast (and grain) a little.

You can also experiment with various colour filters but their effect is really just to help separate colors which are close in tonal range. The theory behind filters is that using a filter complementary in colour to the subject (e.g. an orange or red filter with a blue sky) will darken the subject, while using a filter of a similar colour will lighten it. You will have to increase the exposure depending on the filter factor; if you don't know what it is, you can determine the exposure difference by placing the filter over the flat face of your light meter. Generally, for yellow and orange filters you will need to open up 1 to 2 stops, for green 2 stops, and for red 3 stops.

### Reversal Stocks: 7276 and 7278

The reversal stocks are higher contrast than negative, closer to what you might be used to from 35mm still film, and they provide much more depth in the blacks. Filters can also be used, as with the negative stocks above, to increase the contrast. 7276 Plus-X reversal is rated at 40 ASA Tungsten, 50 Daylight; 7278 Tri-X reversal at 160

Tungsten and 200 Daylight. Reversal film is only available in 100' rolls, at a cost of \$21.88 per roll, with a 9% discount if ordered through LIFT.

Personally, I far prefer the look of B&W reversal to negative, but it has some drawbacks. One is that the exposure latitude (or room for error) is smaller -- 1/2 a stop over and 1 stop under. The biggest problem, however, is if you want to make prints. One option if you don't mind some scratches, and especially if you are hand-processing and getting them anyway, is to process as positive, edit directly with the positive footage, and have an internegative made from your final edit, tape splices and all (double-spliced of course). You can then make multiple prints from your internegative, just make sure that the wind of the optical soundtrack matches that of the internegative. Another possibility would be to have an internegative made from all your positive footage, and then a workprint made to edit with (and have a final print made from your conformed internegative), but that gets expensive. If you're going straight to video, there's no problem.

It is possible to process reversal stocks as negative if you over-expose by 1 stop when shooting, but B&W Film Factory informs me that this will result in a much flatter image, with less contrast even than the negative stocks.



## High Contrast Stocks: 7378 and 7363

7378 and 7363 are two laboratory stocks that can be used to achieve very high-contrast images. 7378 is used for making optical sound tracks and 7363 is a print stock; neither one is meant to be used as a camera stock, so exposure can be tricky and the stocks don't always react predictably. The characteristics of both stocks are similar -- extremely high contrast, fine grain and slow speed. Both can be processed as either negative or positive, depending on your needs, and both are well suited to hand processing and toning. (See Gary Popovich's article in Vol. 14, Issue 7 of the LIFT newsletter for more information on hand processing.)

When trying to decide between the two stocks, the best thing to do is to test both and see if you like one better, and if not, choose the one that is most convenient for you in terms of availability and edge numbers.

### 7378 Sound Stock:

Because 7378 is widely used for optical soundtracks, it is readily available either by ordering through Kodak or at B&W Film Factory. It only comes in orders of 2400' from Kodak (in two rolls of 1200') at a total cost of \$184.30 (which works out to \$7.68 per 100'). You'll have to break it down to your desired lengths, so start saving extra spools and cases! You can do this at LIFT in the Oxberry room in complete darkness, or at home in a light tight room with rewinders or a projector. A dark red safe light may be used, as long as it is no more than 15 watts and is placed at least 4 feet away. To get the right wind on the roll-down lengths, wind the film off onto a reel first, and then rewind the desired length back onto your camera core or daylight spool. If you're using B&W Film Factory to process your film they might roll it down for you, and they also sell it rolled down for \$11 for a 100' roll.

The downside to the 7378 is that it has no edge (keycode) numbers, so if you're planning to have a neg cut you'll have to get some put on. This can be done either at the lab on your unexposed film, or you can have your processed film (both neg and print) edge coded at Numbers (90 Adelaide St. E) for \$.015/ft. With either method there is some risk of scratching or dirtying the neg.

## 7363 Print Stock:

The big benefit of the 7363 over the 7378 is that it already has edge numbers. It is available in 400' rolls for \$48.04, or in a 2400' order for \$288.18, so although it is more expensive than the 7378, the advantage is that you can order smaller quantities. Keep in mind when planning your shoot that as a special order from Kodak it can take a week or longer to get, and you'll have to follow the same roll-down procedure as with the 7378 for the larger rolls. B&W Film Factory often has some small quantities in stock if you want to test a roll before placing a larger order.

### Exposure for hi-con stocks:

Because these films are so high contrast, the highlights and shadows drop off into white or black much sooner than lower contrast stocks. As a result, you must be especially careful in composing your shots and in choosing what to expose for, and there is very little exposure latitude. In general, you will get more detail and mid-tones with lower contrast subjects or lighting. Both stocks have a variable ASA somewhere between 12 and 30, although the 7378 seems to be about 1/3 of a stop faster than the 7363. If you are shooting in the studio with lights, you should do some exposure tests first with various lighting ratios, and bracketing your exposures, to see what works best. With a controlled situation, you should be able to get fairly consistent results.

When shooting with available light, things get a little trickier. The following are some rough guidelines that I have developed from shooting with the 7363 and having it processed as neg at the lab -- results may be different with the 7378 or if you are hand-processing.

Generally for closer shots it is easiest to shoot on overcast days when the light is more diffuse. The ASA for overcast conditions seems to be about 12 ASA. If the subject is fairly dark, you will need to open up between 1/2 to 1 stop from the 12 ASA reading. If it is quite light, you may need to close down 1/2 stop. Another option which I have also found gives fairly consistent results is to expose for 25 ASA, but use the reflected rather than incident readings with your light meter. If in doubt, bracket your exposures (especially when you are just getting used to a stock) and keep detailed shooting notes to refer to later.

For wider shots with sky in them you'll need to close down 1 or 2 stops, depending how bright the sky is. The problem is that this will usually result in the foreground being completely silhouetted. One way to deal with this is to try to find conditions when the sky is dark and cloudy behind the subject, but the subject itself has light on it. I have also found that using an orange filter in those conditions seems to help darken the sky, even when there are grey clouds (I used an 85B filter). You will need to open 2 stops for the filter, then close 1/2 to 1 stop for the sky, depending on how much sky is in the frame.

To film clouds only against a blue sky, use an orange filter and open a total of 1/2 stop from the 12 ASA reading (which means opening 2 stops for the filter, then closing 1 1/2 stops for the sky.) This will give you a black sky with well-defined and very dramatic clouds. Warning: Do not attempt to use a red filter to darken the sky. The print films are not sensitive to red light and your film will come back completely black.

I hope all of the above doesn't seem unduly confusing. Working with unconventional stocks can be extremely frustrating, but rewarding - just as working with regular camera stocks can be! So start looking at the world in black and white, and happy filming!

## SOME USEFUL ADDRESSES:

**Black & White Film Factory**  
40 Cawthra Ave.  
(near Keele and Dundas W.)  
Phone: 763-0750

**Exclusive (for 16mm reversal)**  
50 Portland St.  
Phone: 598-2700

**Numbers**  
90 Adelaide St. E.  
Phone: 941-9412

**Kodak Canada**  
3500 Eglinton Ave. W.  
Phone: 766-8233

**www.kodak.com**  
Kodak's website, which has technical tips, info on film stocks, and answers to frequently asked questions. You can also e-mail questions and they will respond.



# Impressions from Macedonia The Mystery of the Young Macedonian Film

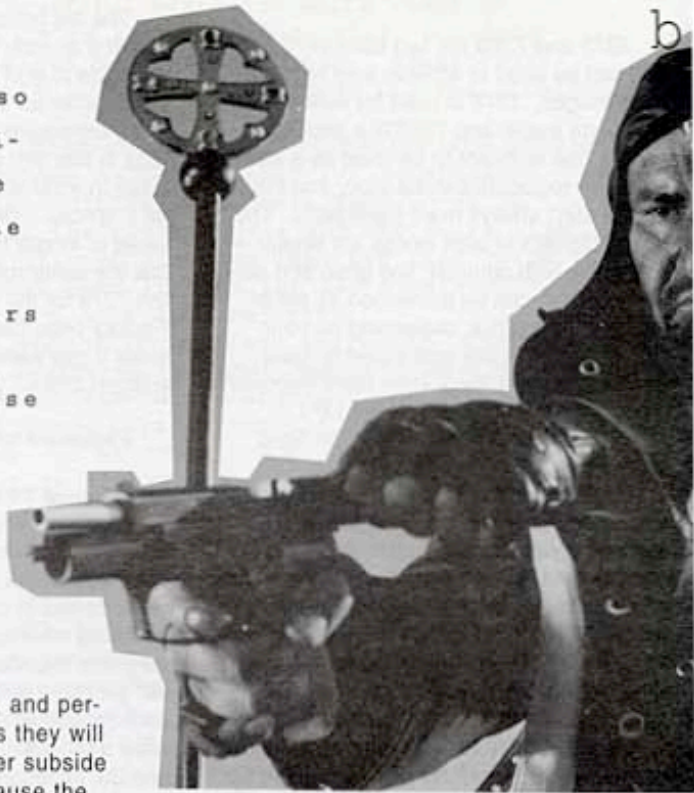
**M**acedonia is a mysterious place for many by name and geographical location, let alone by film art, so I will try to provide some kind of illumination of a region that is both my native land and unfamiliar terrain. I visited the region a few months ago on a quest to uncover the young and struggling filmmakers such as myself, striving to get their unique visions acknowledged in an otherwise obscure country of the world.

Macedonia was known as a republic of the now defunct Yugoslavia before the bloody war tore it apart. Now it is an independent country that has been plagued by political, economic and cultural problems ever since its secession from Yugoslavia in 1993. Fortunately, much like Slovenia in the north, it has not been directly hit by the ravaging effects of the Balkan war. Unfortunately, the country is still seen as a potential powder keg that could ignite depending on the situation in Kosovo, one of Serbia's provinces located just to the north, where Albanians and Serbs still duke it out on a daily basis.

Nevertheless, most of Macedonia's problems are with its economy and when we speak of film and culture, identity. Identity or recognition is something that has eluded Macedonia, at least from a foreigner's point of view. Simply put, (but still confusing) there are two Macedonias in the world now-- the Republic of Macedonia, an independent country (which is what this article is about), and the province of Macedonia located in northern Greece. The distinction lies in the fact that Greek Macedonians are just that, Greek, while those that are now part of the country of Macedonia are Slavic, with the following ethnic minorities: Albanians, Greeks, Bulgarians, Turks, Serbs and Gypsies (there always will be someone begging to differ).

A die-hard Macedonian patriot would have us believe that Macedonians living in the independent country of the same name are ethnically related neither to the Slavic nor the Greek, but rather direct descendants of Alexander the Great. A Greek would have us believe that those living in the independent country of FYROM (The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) are purely of Slavic descent and have no relation to the Great One, who is Greek. So the name Macedonia is really copyright Greek. Or is it?

You see, it's all very complicated; a big ball of knotted yarn that can never be unsnarled, though many experts and amateurs try in vain to untangle it. The Balkans have never proven to be simple, they are puzzling and enigmatic lands; unraveling their mysteries should be prioritized along the same line as finding The Lost City of Atlantis and the truth about UFO's. Wars and strife have plagued the hot-blooded Balkans throughout his-



tory, and perhaps they will never subside because the area is at the crossroads of many cultures, ethnic groups, races, religions and interests who have all fought to dominate at some point in history. It is a big gumbo pot but never a melting pot like North America. Multi-culturalism has always played a positive-negative force in molding the region; mostly negative, because ethnic relations in this part of the world are bogged down by centuries-old, unwavering grudges and resentments. Like a house that has been built on many jagged and faulty stones and bricks; remove a stone from the middle and it will crumble and crush to bits everything it shelters.

So, when I went for my usual visit this year, the mysteries of this region were no more deciphered for me, but more jumbled and illogical than before, so much that I felt I was Alice in some wonderland.

Politically, Macedonia is led by the Social Democratic Party whose members are former Communists from the Yugoslavian days. This is usually the case in Eastern European countries where the conversion to democracy has been mired by something that the West has forgotten only too soon -- the fact that most new democrats are rather recycled commies.

Culturally and spiritually, Macedonia has been struggling to redefine and rebuild its identity. However, mainstream film production and/or alternative film production is not necessarily mirroring that struggle. First of all, there is no such thing as either mainstream or alternative; what is present is an unusual hybrid of the two that reflects the desires of the privileged and cushioned in this country.



# a and Struggling filmmaker

Sandra Danilovic

photos by Sandra Danilovic



still from *Wake Up Dead Man*

Let me explain. This is by no means 100% absolute but impressions based on the interviews and research I conducted while on my trip.

I was able to meet several young, fresh filmmakers who are making films today in Macedonia. They are all in their twenties and thirties, intelligent and fashionable, very cerebral and hardly ever cynical. They are after all making films in a country of two million people, half the population of Toronto, where independent film and video production is enthusiastically supported by the Ministry of Culture (which is the government

agency that has an annual budget of approximately one million dollars) and the state-run Macedonian Television. There are others such as private television networks and production companies that volunteer their services, as well as the state-run production house Vardar Film.

Ironically then, in a place which is struggling to get up on its two feet in Europe and in the world, the means to finance a film are there and the projects, which is usually a feature, bloom in full technicolor. However, how individuals secure that financing for their projects falls in a gray area and is not easy to decode. And what they express in that work is perhaps the only sign of the contemporary state of Macedonian cinema -- one much like the country itself, also afflicted by an identity-crisis.

In a country where the gritty reality of survival hits the population hard, where the gap between the rich and poor has been stretched to painful proportions, where ethnic animosities between Macedonians and Albanians fester malignantly under the skin, where barter is the name of the game in larger-valued financial transactions, where credit cards do not exist and foreign investment stops at McDonald's, where your leathery-faced and wise uncle is right in advising you to stash your cash in your '78 edition of A Christmas Carol rather than deposit it in the bank, where pyramid schemes have seduced those desperate to savour the new-found 'democracy', where the ascent of crime and the mafia begin to mimic that of 1920's Chicago, where readily available drugs consume some of the young and naive,

where the (artificial) flavor of Western capitalism has only arrived on the tip of the average person's tongue, never having been fully digested (or perhaps is just a mirage, a latent image yearning to be developed fully) where the Americanization of an otherwise fine and subtle culture is already medium-done --- this is where young and struggling filmmakers are making their one million dollar budget debut films.

So, I have construed that some individuals or a circle of young and struggling filmmakers are not hit by the daily realities of post-communist fallout, and are suspiciously chipper and confident given the circumstances. Why I can't figure out for certain, but I can deduce, perhaps being slightly facetious in the process.

Now to return to Macedonia's identity-crisis, which is reflected in that country's contemporary cinematic production but not necessarily in any way denoted in the films themselves. (But then, I cannot say for certain as I have not seen these films myself, only heard the opinions and statements of those interviewed).

The interviewees in question are five individuals who compose the main circle of the 'alternative-underground' Macedonian film scene. I begin with Darko Mitrevski and Aleksandar Popovski, on whom the media has bestowed the title 'today's most promising Macedonian filmmakers'. They are two idealistic twenty-something chaps, a hip, odd-couple, smart and cocky and very eloquent, making their debut feature *Wake Up Dead Man* after working in advertising and television and graduating from film school with *Shades of Gray*, a film that has won them some foreign festival recognition and awards.

Their Lucasesque debut feature --Mad Max meets a Macedonian folk tale set in the post-apocalyptic future -- is an approximately one million dollar Macedonian/Yugoslav/ Greek co-production partly financed by the Ministry of Culture, partly by a few private production companies, not to mention (but I will) the country's Ministry of Defense (clarification of this detail to be supplied shortly).

This is how they characterize their struggle to make this film, shot on 35mm with Dolby SR sound:

"In 1997, we had the backing to stitch together a 15 min. short, so we wrote a screenplay which turned out to be 30 minutes. And that script was called just that(Wake Up Dead Man). So we shot it and it turned out to be 50 minutes so then the government (the Ministry of Culture and Defense no less) pitched in and now the film's length is one hour and thirty minutes and in the meantime, a few other subplots also entered the main narrative of the film."

Mr. Mitrevski and Mr. Popovski do not fail to mention that their film has garnered so much praise as to be called a film with a 'break-through stylistic and aesthetic approach, a revolutionary new style, that some people would call a new sensibility (in film-making).' They themselves like to refer to this filmic style as 'ethnogroovy'.

Their cinematic vision, they elaborate, consists of the placement of local Macedonian tales within a globally recognizable framework -- films which will be acceptable to any audience, anywhere around the world. They are after all sick of the status quo Balkan cinema --the gritty kitchen-sink realism and stereotypes perpetuated by the communist regime. So, they want to do



Impressions from Macedonia - The  
Mystery of the Young and Struggling  
Macedonian Filmmaker

cont. from pg 13



Darko Mitrevski and Aleksandar Popovski



Skopje, Macedonia  
Turkish Quarter



Igor Ivanov-Izi

something about "the disintegration of the world and the advent of civilization from the interior, from the people themselves, from us -- and we are not going to freeze over like the dinosaurs. Our film ends with Santa Claus committing a massacre - very black, dark, abominable."

Finally, not to omit the most unlikely source of aid for this film, the Ministry of Defense.

"The Macedonian Army is also this film's donator -they came in with helicopters, weapons, trucks, and special task forces that worked as stuntmen, priceless help. When you have the army behind you, you also feel more powerful - this is the first Macedonian film backed by the Ministry of Defense."

If Jean Chretien could be so kind as to provide us young Canadian struggling filmmakers some of those priceless helicopters that he purchased not long ago, and the Canadian Army as our extras, we

would be very lucky indeed.

'Ecologically subversive' Aleksandar Stankovski, a painter-filmmaker, perhaps the eldest in this film bunch, has just completed his feature film *Maklabas*, in production for four years. Shot on Betacam and transferred to 35mm (including a Dolby SR mix), the budget is more than \$100,000, and dimbing. He states that he has tried to give the illusion that the film is big budget, and not an alternative or underground film, but that it was made like an underground film. 'We are talking about a simulation,' he says. He calls his film an ecological fiction story, a new type of genre. He claims that the film contains massive epic-like scenes which have transpired only because of a phenomenon he calls 'ar: terrorism' or the act of creating the illusion of a big budget film, in this case by sneaking incognito and guerrilla-style into a demonstration somewhere, with a camera and the princi-

pal actor, to make the 10,000 participants look like they are part of the narrative.

This is how his principal actor explains it:

"These people are unconscious extras, police officers are extras without prior knowledge, they don't know who I am, I give them orders and they comply. This country is after all a country of wonders. Wonders are an everyday occurrence."

*Maklabas* was also green-lighted by the Ministry of Culture, when the Minister, a former theatre director (in communist Yugoslavia) who Mr. Stankovski boasts is a very open and culturally-enlightened man, recognized this project's potential. Or perhaps he was just a very good friend (my own hunch).

Janeta Vangeli is a lovely thirty-something artist-filmmaker who incidentally has a starring role in Stankovski's *Maklabas*, (along with Milcho Manchevski, the director of the Oscar-nominated *Before the*





# FILM SCHOOL SOME THOUGHTS:

## Reflections on a Ryerson Experience

By Tina Hahn



I have grown tired of people whining about what a lousy school Ryerson is. I graduated a few years ago, and have come to take the stance that "Film school is what you make it." In other words, you are mistress of your own destiny, and you can't blame anyone else for what you take away from any film school. Here are my observations about the realities of film school and the "real world".

First, you are paying for this. Either right now with your own cash or with an OSAP loan that will take you ten years to repay. Current tuition in the Image Arts department at Ryerson is around \$6,000 -- times the four years it will take you to walk out with a degree. (Many people end up taking a fifth year to finish their liberal arts electives.) Then, you're going to need a least another \$3-5,000 a year in supplies like film, processing and production materials. Ryerson is in Toronto, so add at least 8 months of living expenses ... and even if you get maximum OSAP, you'll still need a part-time job to make ends meet. Student loan rules are changing all the time and perhaps you'll benefit from Chretien's Millennium Scholarship Fund. The cost of film school is the first thing to weigh.

The second is what do you get out of it at the end? Most professionals out there don't care if you have a degree. They will just look at your credits. (Agencies like the NFB do look at education, but in proposals not job resumes. More comments to follow.) So, make sure you graduate with something the industry will take notice of: an amazing reel, a resume full of production experience and some skills that will be useful to someone else.

Everybody wants to be a director ... only a few get the opportunity to make a living at it ... and everyone needs to eat and live (don't forget those loan payments lurking in the background.) So, develop a reel and a resume as a director, but also focus on a craft like editing or sound that is still creative and will pay you to live until you "make" it. Bussing tables, while a noble occupation, does not pad your resume in the film industry.

That said, how does one make the most of a place like Image Arts (as it is now called) at Ryerson? Let's put it in context with all the other schools out there. Ryerson used to be a polytechnic institute, with a focus on practical, nuts & bolts education. The Film programme developed craft people in direction, cinematography, sound,

lighting, editing, etc. The Media Arts programme was a loosely structured dabbling of film, video, still photography and digital media. The Still Photography programme was just that -- high art to commercial photography.

The school itself began as Photographic Arts over 20 years ago. Some of the pros have been there since the beginning and in the 1990's their knowledge can be a little stale. However, some of these same pros are really committed to teaching (like Elvino Sauro who just retired and Bill Scanlon who still teaches a course or two here & there). While I was there, the faculty and students got together and devised a new curriculum to revamp the department and bring it into modern times. Change is happening quickly with a few bumps here and there. The faculty is becoming younger, the equipment (especially the editing and computer equipment) has left the post-war era and is approaching industry standard. And the content flies at you fast and furious -- giving the new student a greater bang for the buck than I ever received. Industry partnerships and co-op placements are being developed, and there are probably a lot of new things I'm not even aware of.

Now, let's return to my earlier premise: film school is what you make it. My own personal observation is that those who get the most out of film school have already had a lot pumped in. That is, mature students who have acquired life experience through working, or traveling or another degree have an edge.

Why? Because they have IDEAS, EXPERIENCE and ENTHUSIASM. Let me explain. The first year at Image Arts is called Foundation Year. Everyone in all three programmes takes the same courses, the information is diverse and dense and the workload is huge. People who walk in the door with IDEAS are at an advantage. When you're struggling with a multitude of creative and technical assignments, having an idea, a concept to work with is paramount.

Every filmmaker should always carry a notebook. If you don't already, start one before you even apply for admission. Write down anything you that inspires you, paste in any image that will serve as inspiration later, jot down bits of dialogue while you're on the streetcar. At the mid-

night hour with an assignment due the next day, that notebook will be your best friend.

Next is EXPERIENCE -- not only what you bring in from before, but that of your classmates. Foundation year is great because you're in class with students from the other programmes. My class in Media Arts was amazing -- we had someone who had been a still photographer and knew the darkroom inside out, another person who had made his own Super 8 and 16mm films, and yet another who had studied video in high school and knew how to do all these cool video effects. These are the people you want to hang out with. When you're handed a dud of a teacher (which happens at any school), these friends will be the ones who see you through.

Finally, ENTHUSIASM. The film industry has only one type of person -- those who DO, who don't say no, who find a way to make things happen regardless of the circumstances. This is the attitude to take at film school too. Procrastination and laziness get you nowhere. Drinking may be fun, but watching student film after student film inspired by beer commercials is pretty tedious. Be original, be creative, be resourceful, be the best.

I know that this article sounds a little like a pep talk, but the decision to go to film school is a hard one. A degree from Ryerson's Image Arts will take you four years (a two-year programme is on its way for mature students). There are workshops at LIFT and other video coops like Triality Square, Charles Street and Ed Video. There are volunteer jobs on productions to build your C.V. There is slugging away and just making a film. Why bother with film school?

First, if you want to be a director, having a film school degree helps when you're applying to get funding for your project. I'm not sure how much it helps, but around the NFB the education section of a CV is always looked at. Degrees in journalism or areas related to the proposal topic (Environmental Science for an environmental film) are also noted and can be seen as substitutes for a film degree. Mind you, this is within the NFB, the arts councils have their own criteria. With broadcasters, the main criteria is what have you done that has been broadcast? What is your track record?

Second, film school provides an environment





where you can experiment ... without writing a grant application or finding a producer or broadcaster. You also have the benefit of working quickly from concept to finished product in a couple months ... or if you leave it to the last minute, a couple weeks or days. In the real world of filmmaking, 90% of the process is waiting for funding and that wait can take years. Film school also provided you with a background on how to construct an image, a history on how images have been constructed to refer to and a language to describe your image making to future funders and to your audience. This is the stuff that you need to know, and can only get by taking courses and reading books --- i.e. going to film school.

Ryerson still is a practical kind of place with a great deal of equipment, the best black and white 16mm lab in the country and state-of-the-art computer imaging equipment. USE IT, as much as you can. This is what your tuition is really paying for -- almost unlimited use of the toys of the trade. This is where the IDEAS are so vital. If you know what idea you want to explore, go as quickly as possible, and do it before your classmates line up around the corner to do it at

the last minute. Do it quickly and well and then help your friends. They'll be more likely to help you when you need it, and think of all the new lines for your resume. Remember what I said about finding a craft ... use your classmates to explore what you like to do and what you're good at (unfortunately, not always the same thing).

Over your four years you should also develop a "peer group". If you look at the industry, school chums are often still working together. Bruce McDonald still uses Steve Monroe for his sound. I know my best jobs have come from the referral of classmates. When you start out, the film industry is huge, and it is the people you know that matter. A class of 30-50 people will get to know a lot of that industry.


You will also get to know your class. And this is the difficult part about the film industry. Everyone will have to gather a crew ... some of the crew members will be doers and some ... well, some will be people that you may stay friends with, may party with, but would never trust a camera with again. If you're teaching yourself film independently, this can be traumatic, given most of these people are relatives. But if you're in film school, you're learning ... which people you want to work with, and which you do not. Class

assignments often throw unlikely people together and beautiful things can happen. The trick is to be constantly open to new friendships, and again, seek out the best and the brightest. These are the people who will become people to know.

The statistics are pretty dismal. Only 5-10% of graduates go on to be independent filmmakers, i.e. directors. I'm not sure what the stats are for those who go on in a film craft. I do know that Foundation Year begins with 150 students (50 in each programme). Of that 70-90 will graduate. Others will leave early and still make it ... like John L'Ecuyer ... but they are exceptions to the rule. Most will find a job in the industry, but if you look at the numbers only 5-10 of the graduating class will become directors. Of my class of 30, I've directed my first short and two of my classmates have or are directing their first docs.

It's a sobering thought, but reread my fourth paragraph, and think of how many directors are making a living wage in Canada. Film school is what you make it. It is an opportunity to find out who you are, and express it in words, images, and hopefully a path that will give you a roof over your head and some satisfaction that the four years of study were worth it after all.



INTERVIEW WITH JILL GIRLING RE: THE VANCOUVER FILM SCHOOL 

**J**ill Girling graduated from the Foundation Film Program offered by the Vancouver Film School five years ago and has worked continually since as an assistant director on such films as *Rumble in the Bronx*, *Losing Chase*, *Legends of the Fall* and *The Wrong Guy*, and on such television series as *The Commish*, *X-Files*, *Due South* and *FX - The Series*. While at the Vancouver Film School, she produced and directed *Paul and Marlowe*, a documentary which investigated the relationship between a gay, surrogate father figure and a young fatherless boy. *Paul and Marlowe* won numerous awards including Best Overall Award at the Yorkton Film Festival, the Award of Merit at the Intercomm Festival in Chicago and an Honorable Mention at the Columbus Film Festival.

**Heather Wilson** spoke to her about the school.

**HW:** My complete-outsider impression of the Vancouver Film School is that it's full of rich, young kids.

**JG:** Sure, there's a certain amount of that. It's a very short program, which attracts kids who don't really know what they want to do with their

lives but have to do something to please mummy and daddy. And it is expensive so not everyone can afford it. The school also attracts people from around the world and a lot of Americans because it's got a pretty good reputation.

**HW:** Why did you choose the school?

**JG:** I went there precisely because it was such a short program. I was older than a lot of my classmates, I was 27, and I wanted to learn as much as possible about the film business in the least amount of time. Had I made the decision to become a filmmaker when I was younger, I would have loved to have gone to Ryerson or York or NYU or even UCLA. It would have been great to spend four years studying the theory and history of film. But I was 27, and I just wanted to get into the business. So VFS was great for me.

Unfortunately, what attracted me most about the program became the school's largest drawback. When I went there, I thought the program was a year long. I didn't realize that it lasted only 8 months. 8 months is far too short, especially the way the course was set up when I went there.

For example as part of the documentary course, which was excellent by the way, we had to

pair up and pitch an idea in front of our classmates and teachers. There were 24 of us in the class and of the 12 pairs, only 4 ideas were picked to be fully produced and then the other pairs had to work on the chosen films. Well, *Paul and Marlowe* was picked and while myself and my partner were finishing editing it on video, the other people in the class were learning to edit film. I would've loved to have learned how to edit film, but we were too busy. I also didn't really ever learn how to load a magazine properly, again, we were just too busy doing other things.

**HW:** So I gather, with such a short time-line, there's not too much emphasis on the academics of filmmaking, but is there enough time to truly learn the craft of say, sound?

**JG:** Not really. If you really want to be a D.O.P., you might want to study elsewhere I think. It's a great school for learning the crafts of writing and directing. And animation from what I hear, although I didn't have much to do with that program. The script-writing class was excellent and so was the documentary course. I found that the editing class left a lot to be desired. There was a producer's class offered after the



# Lou does SIFT <sup>TV</sup> Summer Institute of Film & Television

by Louis Taylor

Karen King at the NFB and the Black Film & Video Network asked me to write this report about my—no longer recent—Summer Institute of Film & Television experience sometime in July. It is now January. In defense I can only say that the rigors and confusion of fatherhood has drastically reduced my ability to complete a project within anything resembling a time line. Here, finally, is my SIFT experience.

In preparing for the Summer Institute of Film & Television (SIFT) one should be aware of two things. First, SIFT is in Ottawa—which is somewhere in Canada. The second is that you have to leave our fair city-state to get there. This caused me no little trauma in the weeks leading up to my junket.

Generally I'm violently phobic towards anything outside the 416, yet there I was preparing to depart the safe, culturally gated environs I know and love to go Hi Ho-ing off to the Great White North to attend a Pan Canadian workshop. I briefly wondered whether my interest in this expedition (and that little twitch above my left eyebrow) was evidence of a deeper malaise.

A little back history. In the summer of 1996, I

was approaching a momentous crossroads. I was soon to become a father. Anxious reflection made the rocky life of a actor in a country with an embryonic understanding of inclusion seem a tad quixotic. Coupled with an indigenous cultural sector looking to become a road stat beneath the smoking wheels of America's monster media truck, my chosen career path began to resemble an arcane form of seppuku. In the delirium of the moment, I decided to explore writing and directing for film as a possible career alternative. Call it an inexorable affinity for road kill.

I began sketching out ideas for a documentary. One explored the mythology around Black Male Sexuality, another documented my progress and striving with the idea of fatherhood (titled *Esther, Baby & Me*, presently in pre-production). It was during this time that I received a promotional package from SIFT.

The institute advertises itself as a week long, moving pictures extravaganza that includes: a slew of intensive workshops geared towards all levels of film & video makers, screenings of soon to be released Canadian and international films and a mixed bag of impromptu seminars. The brochure guarantees that for five days you would eat, drink and excrete film. Afterwards you would be well on your way to joining the illustrious ranks of Canada's peerless film & video establishment (broad translation of brochure literature).

Being an inveterate elitist, I envisioned this to be my dream film boot camp. I filled out the application form and applied for a SIFT scholarship.

You should note that SIFT has two bursaries in place. A multiculturalism grant from the Ministry of Heritage and a SIFT bursary, which I first thought was for po' white folk.

At first I was loath to apply for the multicultural grant. To some degree I felt bursaries based on otherness to be another insidious form of subjugation. A tacit acknowledgment of an inability to compete. Then I thought "Fool! Grab the money!!".

I completed the bursary application but by the time I sent it I had missed the Ministry deadline. I then applied for the po' white folk fund. Guiltily, I filled out the form, all the time chastising myself as an abuser of the new, improved quota line, a manipulator of the all inclusive but compartmentalized, national cultural platform. But then I thought "Shit, fool! Grab the money!!".

I'd long ago concluded that current, conserv-

ative nomenclature interprets equity as an acceptance of restrictions on one's aspirations and access as a code word for privileged entry and narrowly distributed enfranchisement. This lead me to my often repeated, late 90's, affirmation statement, "Fuck, socio-ethical discourse, give me the money!".

Around the same time, the NFB's Karen King was holding roundtable discussions on the state of the industry for colored folk and how the NFB could be of assistance. After pocketing my usual cynicism, I and other participants talked with Karen about what the NFB was doing behind all the smoke and sirens. It turned out that the "B" had recently activated a small fund for the folk to attend workshops, seminars and such on documentary making and that if I had anything on the go I should fill out a request for funding. Now, baby you know I was on it! Before you could say "Slash and Burn! Ooph! There goes another fund!", I was on her with a budget, a proposal and a scintillating smile. Well the NFB money came through, the po' white folk fund was darker then I thought and I was off to Ottawa and SIFT to attend the Documentary 101 workshop, taught by Ric Bienstock.

**What follows are the highs and lows of my SIFT experience in (very) loose chronological order.**

**Ottawa** The first thing you'll notice is that Ottawa is not Toronto. It's cleaner, prettier and whiter. The town is a postcard to confederation. A declaration that this is indeed the hub of Canada. Here the conflicts are monolithic and scarily simple. The political Goliaths are the English and French Divide and the Balanced Budget, with Western Wrath and Saber Rattling weighing in as a steroid pumping, butt stomping David. Issues of multiculturalism, immigration, gender, race, sexual orientation, poverty, etc., are the dust kicked up as they struggle and generally accorded the same respect.

Ottawa is a lovely place to visit but I'd be on a greyhound outa there in a minute if someone tried to make me live there. Architecturally, it's kind of like a swollen Oakville with historical buildings.

## Tom Shoebridge

SIFT is the brain child of madman, 50+, Caucasian, scriptwriter Tom Shoebridge; a gung-ho, overachiever whose old enough to know better but doesn't really give a shit. I would learn later that Tom's motto was, "Sleep? Won't you get

"official" portion of our time was over which lasted two months and was optional, although it was included in the tuition we paid. I wish I'd taken it but by then I was working.

**HW:** You mentioned earlier that it was quite an expensive school to attend ....

**JG:** When I was there it cost \$15,000 for the eight months. It's more now. However, it did cover all our film stock, the use of equipment, processing and other stuff.

You only had to pay more if you wanted to do something outside the normal course of a shoot. So it wasn't that bad a deal. There are only 5 out of my 24 classmates that still work in the business so I don't know if it was a good deal for all of us. But it was worth it for me because I haven't really been out of work since.

According to the Vancouver Film School website, the Foundation Film Program currently costs \$17,655 and a new class starts up every two months. The school also offers courses in 3D Computer Animation, Multimedia, Classical Animation and in Acting for Film and Television. For more information, surf to [www.multimedia.edu](http://www.multimedia.edu).





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enough when you're dead?". By the third day I wanted to rip open his braincase and exorcise the section of his frontal lobe responsible for his drug-free, early morning perkiness but I'm getting ahead of myself.

**The Hostel** The first thing I had to deal with were accommodations. SIFT hadn't reserved enough hotel rooms, so I was on my own. They recommended the International Youth Hostel. I thought I'd give it a shot. I hadn't slept in a hostel in 19 years. I would rue that decision.

The Ottawa International Youth Hostel is a converted prison built some time before the discovery of electricity. It is also the site of Canada's last Federal execution. They still have the hanging room marked out in the basement, by the washing machines. That correlation brought up too many macabre associations.

The "rooms" are barred cells with dark tarps draped across the bars to give the illusion of privacy. The walls are chunks of boulders mortared together and left rough. I suspect they were left that way to prevent prisoners from ruining their posture by leaning against them. Each "room" had 4 bunk beds and a plywood wardrobe. The wash-room were at one end of the hall, the showers at the other.

The first night was a fiasco. There is something indescribably agonizing about trying to sleep in a confined space with 7 strange men with sinus problems, on a bunk bed bought from ascetic monks who probably enjoyed hair shirts. The only thing I can compare it to is a bad acid trip I had in '71.

I knew it was over for me and the hostel when the next night, sometime in the wee hours, I made a trip to the washroom and stepped in...well lets just say some people really should practice a more rigorous form of sphincter control. I was outa there the next morning. The rest of the day went by in a haze. Between the sleep deprivation and what I had stepped in I was rendered incapable of coherent thought. I became a zombie desperately seeking a clean crypt. My original impression of Ottawa as a pristine, little hamlet was forever blemished. Luckily a friend came through and I was able to spend the rest of the trip in blissful comfort at the home of a friend of theirs who was leaving town the next day for 2 weeks. Nothing to step on but broadloom and stained oak floors. I was in heaven.

**The Opening** The dance performance at the opening ceremony had to be seen to be believed. In a tribute to *The English Patient* director Anthony Minghella, the institute had hired a local belly dancer to play on the film's North African theme. It was like listening to a Nina

Simone standard covered by the Partridge Family.

A friend from Toronto and I had to viciously pinch each other to curb an urge to stand up on our seats, point at the stage and guffaw like zoo chimps. The rest of the auditorium rang with the silence of embarrassment and suppressed mirth. Neither of us had seen such a display of bad ethno-politics in years. It made me realize there is a reason why I don't go out much.

**The Classes** All fun (and horror) aside the SIFT week is not about questionable, live performances or shoddy accommodations. Broken down to the essentials the SIFT workshops are about learning and networking on top of learning and networking. The intensity of the instruction is fierce and unrelenting. Classes run from 9 to almost 5 with a short, usually non-existent lunch break (we usually brought our food back to the class). Optional lunch seminars on a broad range of topics are offered. Last years included: a panel discussion on the state of Canadian documentary making, featuring some of the fields leading film makers and producers and a demonstration on how to shoot a dramatic scene with a world class director. The classes are top notch and worth every penny.

**After Class (Boozin' & Schmoozin')** I vaguely remember the late night, after class scene. I know it involved unrepentant networking, invaluable exchanges of technical information, story idea honing and analysis, card exchanges and late rights with my head plunged in buckets of draft. These late night, bar get-togethers were where I developed my extreme envy and animosity toward Tom. No matter how late we babbled on or what quantities of liquors were drunk, Tom blithely sailed on, lucid long past the time the rest of us were drooling in our drinks. Not once did he leave a scene of drunken prodigality before I did. The one time I tried to outlast him...well I suppose I should try to retain a shred of dignity here. And every morning he had the unmitigated gall to cheerily bounce through the hordes of red eyed groaners, blearily demanding to know if anyone remembered who they were, tossing off box mots and folksy hang over remedies. However he did it, I fervently hope it cost him. Many of the story ideas I'm presently working on probably had their beginnings at these post class revels. At least I think so.

**Instructors** Ric Bienstock, my instructor in Documentary Making 101, is representative of the caliber of instruction found at the Institute. A tenacious and determined documentary director, she has directed and produced a number of award winning films. Her practical knowledge of the

business, encouragement and penetrating criticism of story ideas made the workshop an invaluable experience. I heard similar comments about the other workshop leaders.

**Participants** Another unforgettable part of the SIFT experience is the interaction between participants. Our class was comprised of individuals with a broad range of interests, film experience and career desires. It was in conversation with class mates that I fully began to realize that I could and would be a film maker. The bonding and constant exchange of ideas is another SIFT plus.

**Information** Reams and reams of information. Paper poured out like an engulfing wave of tactile comprehension. More than could be immediately inputted. Well, if you avoided the bars you might, but you'd miss out on one of the most important parts of the intensive. I think.

**The Films** Films are screened in two ways. At an off site theatre or on video in class. The film makers are there to discuss their films and field audience questions. This is a marvelous opportunity to ask the questions you sit on during festival screening where technical questions are asked by an audience slaving for set gossip and star tales. The film makers are there to talk to film makers. For newbies, the questions are as interesting and informative as the answers.

**What I got Out of It** The one huge lesson I learned at SIFT is that I can be a film maker. In one week I went from a novice with a gilded, filmic facade, to a confirmed acolyte of the medium. I learned that we all start some place and from there the only direction is up. That there is a community of novice, emerging and established film makers out there who are supportive and interested in my progress. That all I need is a good idea, perseverance and some people to lend a hand.

The SIFT experience is so precious not because of the information disseminated or connections made or any one particular reason. The SIFT experiences value is in the aggregate, in the belief instilled in its alumni, that all goals can be accomplished.

In closing I have to say much thanx and big applause to Karen King, Tom Shoebridge, SIFT, and the NFB. Without the opportunity to go to SIFT my conviction and belief in my choice to become a film maker would not be what it is today. I unreservedly recommend SIFT to all beginning and emerging film makers.





# Marty goes to art school

By Marty Bennett

## These are the images I

**recall;** I am five and my brother in law is showing some typical home movie stuff; their wedding, our recent trip to Niagara falls, kids playing in the snow goofing around for the camera. Two images stand out. The first is of my sister. She was always the most reluctant to be photographed. "Pictures always make me look old," she'd say, even at 21. Show her a photograph of herself and she'd rip it up. There is nothing unusual about this image with the exception that the projector is run in reverse. The audience is in an uproar.

I am also five when my sister takes me to the movies. It is my first movie and it is *Mary Poppins*. With the exception of flying umbrellas I don't remember much. I do remember leaving the dark cinema and coming out into the daylight. I am holding my sister's hand tight but I am frightened and maybe even a little irritated. The scar is permanent. My disdain for musicals is attributed to that day. Many years later I will make a futile attempt at producing a short musical.

I am five again, we are at that family screening and this picture is of my father, a much more somber image than my sister's but none less awkward. This precious Super 8mm will play over and over in my head, it is my memory of him. We are in the living room. There is to be a family portrait, the only one in which my father and all the children will ever be together at once. It is the formality of the movement that intrigues me; oldest to the youngest, boys standing, girls seated in front. There are fifteen of us, plus my parents. My father walks into the room and he is holding me in his arms. I am about three in this footage, my face never turns to the camera but it is obvious I am crying. His movement is slow and painful, sixty years my senior he is already an old man. He will die a few short years later.

**July 14:** Well, after many years of procrastinating I've made it to OCA. I am through my first year and in spite of the boredom I've suffered I'm still excited by the prospect of making films. I'm glad I didn't go to film school after all, I have little interest in participating in the follies of big budget movie production. I just want to make films. I like the creative energy here. Second year promises to be exciting.

**Art school: Year 2.** I'm sitting in film 101, there are ten boys in this class and they are all taller than me. I am a little intimidated. Today's topic is intro. to camera and I fall asleep. When I wake up ten Quentin Tarantino's are starring at me. I ask god for forgiveness.

**Assignment one:** Shoot a short Super 8mm, 2 minutes or less on a topic of your choice. I choose memory. I call my brother in law and ask

him for the footage of my father. He tells me it is in a state of decay. I beg him to send it anyway. I ask my friend to shoot images of me running through an abandoned old house, when it is processed I intercut this with the old Super 8mm footage of the family photo session. I've made my first film. We screen the films in class. There are ten movies about guns.

**October 1:** I'm feeling a bit disillusioned right now., My instructor said I should consider installation. I'll admit video is looking pretty promising. Tomorrow our film class is going for a tour of the Cinesphere.. I think I'll stay home. I will not get depressed.

**October 31:** I don't understand why there is such a focus on Hollywood film structures. Except for the Tarantino brothers I don't think anyone is really interested in making industry films however, we all seem forced to follow the hierarchy. I'm not prepared to spend big \$'s. I don't feel like film is a viable creative tool.

**Art school: Year 3.** I am registered in all possible film courses. Two months into the school year and I have a snappy script - its about a gay man studying to be a belly dancer, rewrite after rewrite - 21 times, shooting schedule, shot breakdown, story board, cast of 12 and crew of 8 are booked, craft service will be there, budget of \$4000 for a 5 minute film. All of my brilliance will be captured in glorious 16 mm. I watch *Citizen Kane* over and over for inspiration. I search for the line of axis which will not confuse the audience. Pencil and paper in hand I get a headache trying to map it out. By February I am ready. The day before the big shoot I check my account. After a quick consultation with my producer we decide to scale down the entire production and shoot on Super 8mm.

**February 14:** I must remember to call Sara tonight. She had a bit of a breakdown in class today. The budget for her film is over \$10,000 half of which is going toward costumes.. Note to myself - never apply for a bank loan for a student film.

**Shooting Day:** the still photographer keeps fighting with my camera person so I leave the shoot in the hands of my trusty AD and go search for the craft table. Cold coffee and cheesies. I feel like a director. When I get back to set the shoot is over.

**April 1:** I can't believe I made it through that fiasco. Never again. I got my footage back

today, incredibly the stuff looks amazing. I've been thinking about blowing it up to 16mm but that's just wishful thinking.

**May 1:** Today I sat on the jury for the annual student exhibition - I'll admit this only to myself - even the movies about guns look good. There is some kind of weird morphing going on between video art, experimental film and Hollywood. It looks great. Despite the odds we made it. I wonder how we'll survive 4th year.

**May 24:** Two things happened today. The scholarship jury liked my film and I got a scholarship for \$10,000 in William F. White equipment rentals. Not sure what that has to do with Super 8mm - I guess I'll light the shit outta my next Super 8mm film. I also heard back from the TVO telefest competition -- "Your concept showed promise but did not deliver technically. 16mm should not be so dark. Craft needs attention. rating out of ten = 3." What about Super 8mm to video?

**Art school: Year 4.** experimental film class: I think I'm in danger of failing this course. I want to make a personal documentary but I can't describe the project in one sentence. We're still watching *Citizen Kane*. This time the instructor provided the axis diagram.

**Final Project:** These are the parameters. You must shoot on 16 mm, no found footage no shooting before your script is approved and you must shoot from a schedule. Oh yes the Bolex ... too archaic.

After 3 months struggling, I still cannot condense my concept into one sentence. My instructor freaked out at me so I submit some half assed script about Mary Poppins the guardian angel who comes to tutor the belly dancer. He can only dance backwards. It is a sequel to my previous short and Julie Andrews turns down the lead. It is a musical and will cost \$12,000 if I expect to finish on film. My instructor approves it.

**February 28:** I lost my cookies today and dropped out of art school. "Art school is what you make it."

**Today:** I'm making films again. Trying to use it as a creative tool. I looked at the footage of my sister again. The audience is still in an uproar.





**C**itizen Kane is quite possibly the greatest film ever made. Orson Welles was a genius. What a shame that his career ended the way it did. He was reduced to doing TV commercials at a time when it wasn't yet chic and it was heart breaking to watch as his slim, handsome stature was transformed to obese proportions. So a conversation with my friend and communications professor progressed. But wait a minute I interrupted, paint Orson Welles black and he'd look exactly like Barry White. And we all know that Barry is a sexual icon. Welles even sounds like Barry White. My friend looked up, smiled, reconsidered and said, Sure your right!

After the conversation I began to think if there were other ways in which Orson Welles' master piece, *Citizen Kane*, could be talked about. Film makers, critics, and film scholars constantly applaud the film for its use of deep focus, sound editing techniques, ceiling shots, jump cuts etc. These techniques although not original to Welles' film were never quite employed in other films in the same way as they were in *Citizen Kane*.

So *Citizen Kane* is a technical masterpiece. Nothing particularly new or fresh about that observation, but what else is it? Then I came across a statement that triggered my creative engine. "The way to best understand *Citizen Kane* is to stop worshipping it as a triumph of technique... The glitter of the film's style reflects a dark and serious theme; Kane's vision is as rich as its virtuosity." So I mused over my vision of the film and soon realized that it too was dark. I must admit that after my first viewing of the film I could not join in with the enthusiasm of my fellow class mates as they, with smiles and awe, struggled to figure out the meaning of Rosebud. Nor could I immediately share in their pleasure as they tried to determine which Kane was the real Kane: the Kane recalled by Mr. Berstein, Jed Leeland, Susan Alexander, the butler or the newsreel? Instead I focused on my growing discomfort as I recalled the all too familiar images and portrayal of black characters in one of the greatest film ever made.

As a black male spectator, here in North America, I bring with me into the spectatorial space the baggage that comes along with such an identity. I have been born into a history of white superiority complexes that are largely generated as a consequence of black inferiority complexes. The fight against racism has come a long way, but in my opinion we have equally as far, if not further, to go. As we become more and more sophisticated so do our bad habits.

Then, just when I thought mine was a lone voice crying out in the wilderness I discovered Manthia Diawara. He suggests in his essay, *Black Spectatorship: Problems of Identification and Resistance*, that "The components of 'difference' among elements of race, gender, and sexuality give rise to different readings of the same material." In order for me to tap into the pleasures of the golden era of the Hollywood narrative not only am I expected to permit the willing suspension of disbelief, I have to be willing and able to suspend my self, my identity. Consider this, Laura Mulvey points out in her classic piece, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* that: "As the specta-

tor identifies with the main male protagonist, as he projects his look on to that of his like, his screen surrogate, so that the power of the male protagonist as he controls events coincides with the active power of the erotic look, both giving a satisfying sense of omnipotence."

As a person of color the characters in *Citizen Kane* who looked like I do, and therefore made identification easier, were far less than powerful. In fact, from my perspective they were quite the opposite. I found them to be weak and impotent. They filled me with frustration and self loathing rather than a "Satisfying sense of omnipotence." It would appear, then, that Mulvey's article on *Visual Pleasure*... has failed to take into account the nature of spectatorship informed by an understanding of the politics of race.

I find support for my observation from Bell Hooks when she writes in *The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators* that, "Many feminist film critics continue to structure their discourse as though it speaks about 'women' when in actuality it speaks only about white women." I think the same holds true for many white male film scholars and critics. I'll come back to this theme of black female spectatorship later. For now, however, I want to focus on Welles' troubling depiction of black men as subservient, malevolent, melancholy or just plain ridiculous.

The first images of black men are associated with communism, decay and death. Three suspicious looking black men, one of whom is on roller skates, stand outside a decrepit building described by the narrator of the News on The March newsreel as the building of the decaying news paper daily: *The Inquirer*. On the building, screen right, is the soviet symbol of the hammer and sickle.

In contrast, throughout the film Charles Foster Kane distances himself from the shameful stigma of communism. He boldly proclaims that he is and always has been one thing, an American. This despite the disparaging remarks of his aging guardian, Walter P. Thatcher, that Charles Foster Kane was a communist. Almost immediately then, from the beginning of the film the black man is coded not only as racial other but also ideological other.

Our next encounter occurs later in the newsreel when a black man is seen wheeling an aged, isolated and immobilized Kane around the vacant grounds of Xanadu. This through the fence, paparazzi shot codes blackness as impotent and decaying by linking the black male figure, not with a youthful, vibrant and energetic Kane but rather with an old and dying Kane.

The next time we see a black man, however, is associated with a youthful, energetic Kane who has recently taken over and moved into the building of the New York *Inquirer*. Joseph, however, unlike the young, idealistic Jed Leeland, Kane's best friend, or the young and loyal Mr. Berstein, is an old black servant who is requested by Kane to bring him some food. Joseph leaves the frame and the scene and never returns, not even to bring Kane his dinner.

Our next encounter of color occurs during the celebration of the *Inquirer's* surpassing the circulation of their rival newspaper, *The Chronicle*. A band of black trumpet players and drummers enter the hall playing the tune that celebrates the personality and generosity of good old Charley Kane. The band is led by a grinning, ivory toothed bandleader who revealing all his teeth, closes



his eyes and grins directly into a distorting wide angled lens. The only thing missing from this stereotypical iconography of racial inferiority was the watermelon.

The grinning 'darky' is an image that became popular during reconstruction as anti-abolitionists sought to prove abolitionists wrong. They smiled all the time, pre-slavery camps argued, because they didn't have a care in the world. Life was good on the plantation because the master took care of everything for the slave.

The final image of black masculinity is set in far less cordial and pleasant circumstances. Kane has taken his rather childlike second wife, Susan Alexander, camping to the Florida Everglades. A black man, surrounded by hovering bats, a roasting pig on a spit, various women in shadowy and seemingly compromising positions, sings a disturbing reworking of *It Must Be Love* set to the beats of the ritualistic "jungle" drums. This coupled with an anonymous, piercing scream and violent confrontation between Kane and Alexander at the end of the sequence creates a hellish picture rather than a scene of happy campers. The image of the black man swaying too and fro, only for a moment on screen, while he sings a song that lacks harmony (in the traditional sense) and strikes nothing but discord, coupled with the voodoo type rhythms in the background create a lasting image of the low level that Kane has been reduced to.

At this point in the film Kane is a pathetic old man, trying desperately to hold onto the power and authority that he wielded with such ease as a young man. Kane is the stereotypical hen-pecked husband who struggles to contain his wife. Since her suicide attempt Alexander, a cross section of the American public, has become increasingly irritable and demanding. Kane, once married to a president's niece, the man who would be President, a man of culture, and the one time champion of the common man has been reduced to quite common circumstances. Try as he might, the isolation of his castle on a hill cannot prevent his descent into a personal hell. Gone are the lofty ideals, the passion and energy. Like so many working class men, excluded from authority within the public sphere, Kane, a man accustomed to public power and authority, a man able to influence a nation's foreign policy (Kane's agitation for the Spanish American War) has become dependent upon the private, domestic status of husband as his tool of authority. He resorts to exercising authority within the private sphere of the home, albeit a pleasure dome perched on a mountain. Alexander, however, refuses to be the type of wife that is seen and not heard. She inflicts the final blow that pulls the rug of self-confidence from under Kane. Alexander's abandonment signifies yet another loss of a Kane possession. This loss, however, is one that he will not recover from. Alexander, then is a strange mixture of female power and infantilism. With a character like Susan Alexander, what then is the nature of visual pleasure that a black woman could potentially derive from a film like *Citizen Kane*?

Bell Hooks provides a possible answer. She explains that, "Every black woman I spoke with who was/is an ardent moviegoer, a lover of Hollywood film testified that to fully experience the pleasure of mainstream cinema they had to close down critique, analysis; they had to forget racism. And mostly they didn't think about sexism." She continues, "To experience pleasure . . . [a black

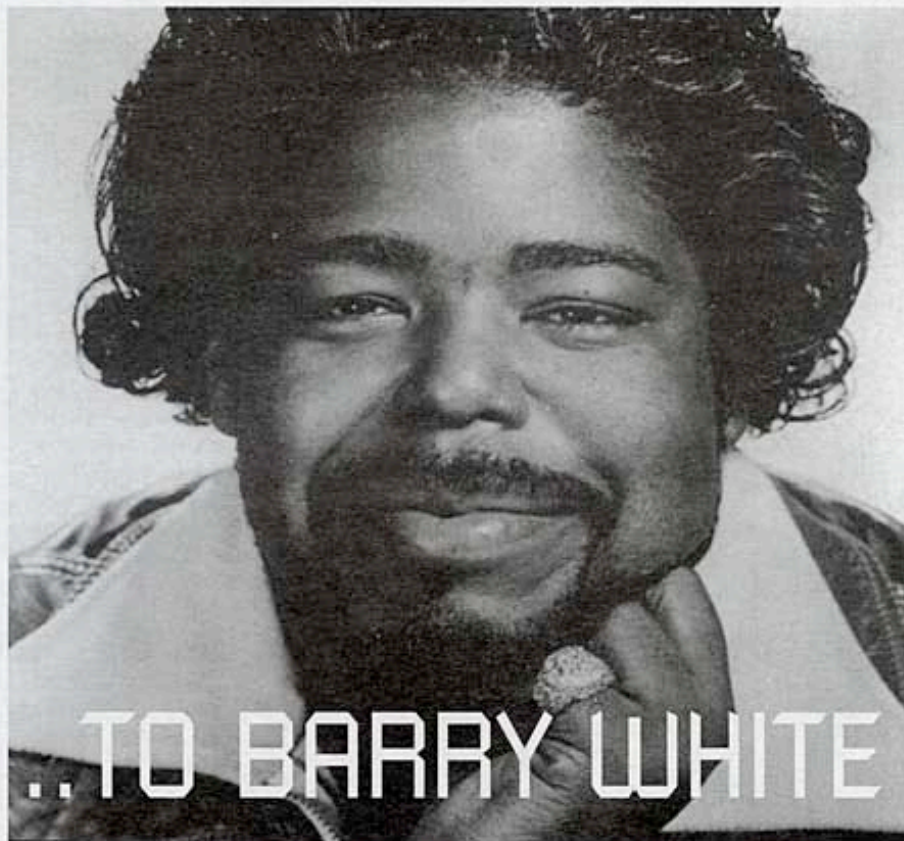
woman] sitting in the dark, must imagine herself transformed, turned into the white woman portrayed on screen."

If, like myself, a black woman is looking for a point of entry, a familiar and identifiable source through which she can vicariously experience the pleasures of on-screen reality, unfortunately, in *Citizen Kane* she will not find one. The world according to Kane, the archetypal American, is a world where women of color simply do not exist. I am not suggesting that Hollywood could have, or should include African Americans simply for the sake of including them. But a story about America as the original title of the screenplay by Herman Mankiewicz suggests, is an incomplete one without a look at African Americans, both male and female.

This may be another paper but Native People, also exscribed from the American landscape need to

people resisting dominant images. I know many people of diverse races who also engage in similar forms of resistance. For the purposes of this paper, however, I have narrowed my focus on black/African Americans. For many, then, the willing suspension of disbelief is turned on its head. Annette Kuhn in *The Power of The Image* explains that: The acts of analysis, of deconstruction and reading 'against the grain' offer an additional pleasure - the pleasure of resistance, of saying no: not to unsophisticated enjoyment by ourselves and others, of culturally dominant images, but to structures of power which ask us to consume them uncritically and in highly circumscribed ways.

As I have attempted to point out, the sparse and troubling images of black men in *Citizen Kane*, coupled with the total invisibility of African American women, has made my appreciation and



voice their concerns. And this isn't a call for curbing creative control but more a call for artist to take a closer look at the ways in which they choose to represent the world. In short an expectation to see something more than the stereotypical depiction of African Americans in a film largely about America is not an unfair expectation.

My look at *Citizen Kane*, although not yet over, has been one informed by an understanding and awareness of the politics of race and racism. Just as there have been many black men who have refused to identify with the celebrated male, white protagonist so prevalent in classical Hollywood cinema, so have many black women chosen not to identify with Hollywood's representation of white womanhood, and resist the phallogocentric gaze of desire and possession.

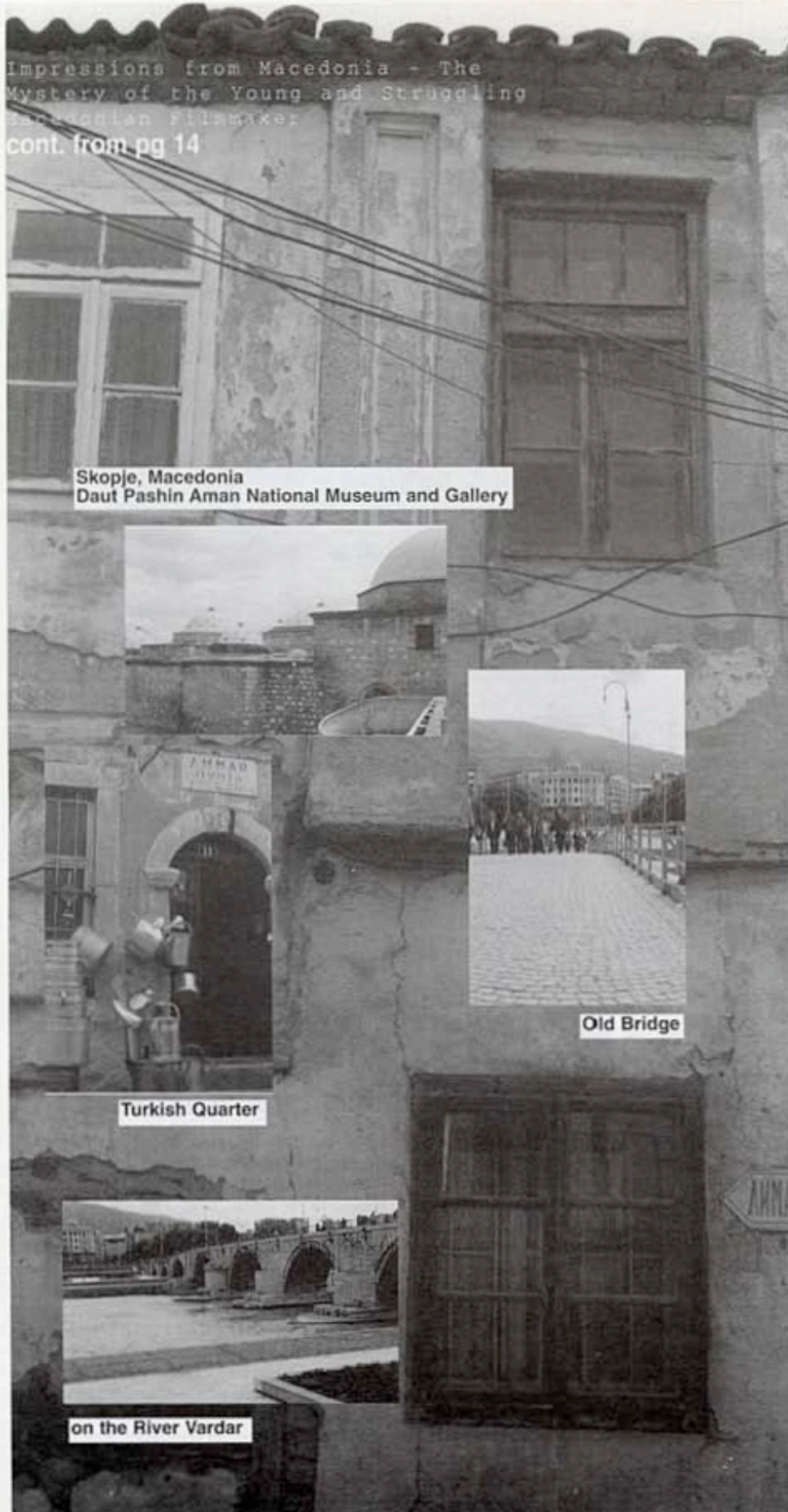
I do not believe that black people are the only

evaluation of the film somewhat different in focus than the usual reading of the film. I wonder about the on-screen reality of Joseph (the only black man identifiable by name). What is his story? I wonder about the black musicians. Where did they go after performing for Kane and his entourage? Did they have families? Where did they live? What did their houses or apartments look like? What were their dreams and aspirations?

As a black man I look for a point of identification and I find it not necessarily with the main attraction (Charles Foster Kane) but rather within the back ground *mise en scene*. In this Hollywood film, quite possibly the greatest film ever made, the people that look like I do are simply two dimensional cardboard cut-outs and part of the lavish scenery. In my imagination, however, they are given a third dimension. Today the struggle to create three dimensional characters who happen to be people of color continues. ●



Impressions from Macedonia - The  
Mystery of the Young and Struggling  
Macedonian Filmmaker  
cont. from pg 14



Skopje, Macedonia  
Daut Pashin Aman National Museum and Gallery



Old Bridge

Turkish Quarter



on the River Vardar

Rain). Her feature is called *The Master of the Games*, and when I had the fortune of meeting this articulate woman, she was in the middle of digital post-production, with an enviable editing schedule that would probably atomize the post-pro budgets of Western filmmakers.

Ms. Vangeli's film, so far costing more than \$150,000, and ascending, was originally conceived as a short film which ballooned to something with a shooting ratio of 25:1, and naturally was reborn into a feature -a replay of the circumstances surrounding our two earlier filmmakers, Mr. Mitrevski and Mr. Popovski. This film whose style is inspired by post-modernism and by pop art, is a play on the different levels of domination within post-communist structures of hierarchy in the spiritual and material world. Ms. Vangeli has treated it like a painting, because of her previous experience with fine art and video art, and she claims it is unconventional narrative with elements of convention. Interestingly, Ms. Vangeli is a half-patriot, spending time both in Macedonia and in Germany, her other adopted home. I asked her about the differences of working as a filmmaker in the West vis-a vis the East.

"What is good here in Macedonia is that here affairs unravel negating the whole logic of circumstance, for example, there is a paradox, things that are impossible become possible." Logical or illogical, Ms. Vangeli has also been rescued by the Ministry of Culture.

I would like to complete this essay with perhaps the most genuine filmmaker of the lot, in my view. Igor Ivanov-Izi is a 25 year old experimental filmmaker whose short film *The Clock* won at the Strasbourg Film Festival and whose work tends to garner a lot of critical praise, at home and abroad. He works solely in the short film format and is the first one to admit that financing is not an easy task in Macedonia.

His films get backing from the various television networks whose programming mandates include art cinema and experimental/alternative shorts to fill the gaps in their schedules. Their charity is usually manifested in the form of a generous supply of equipment and production/post-production facilities (there are no equipment rental houses in Macedonia). Mr. Ivanov's vision is politically-driven: 'politics as a form of repression and as a culture of living.' He mentions an expression: "the Macedonian romantic terrorism", which is: "The only positive terrorism in



the world which should serve as an example to everyone, (in other words), it is better to kill yourself than to plant a bomb in a London double-decker and kill 3 other innocent people."

He further states that the Macedonian socio-economic situation is serious and reality is harsh, direct and ever-present. He refuses to elaborate with examples because he says he doesn't want to confront this reality.

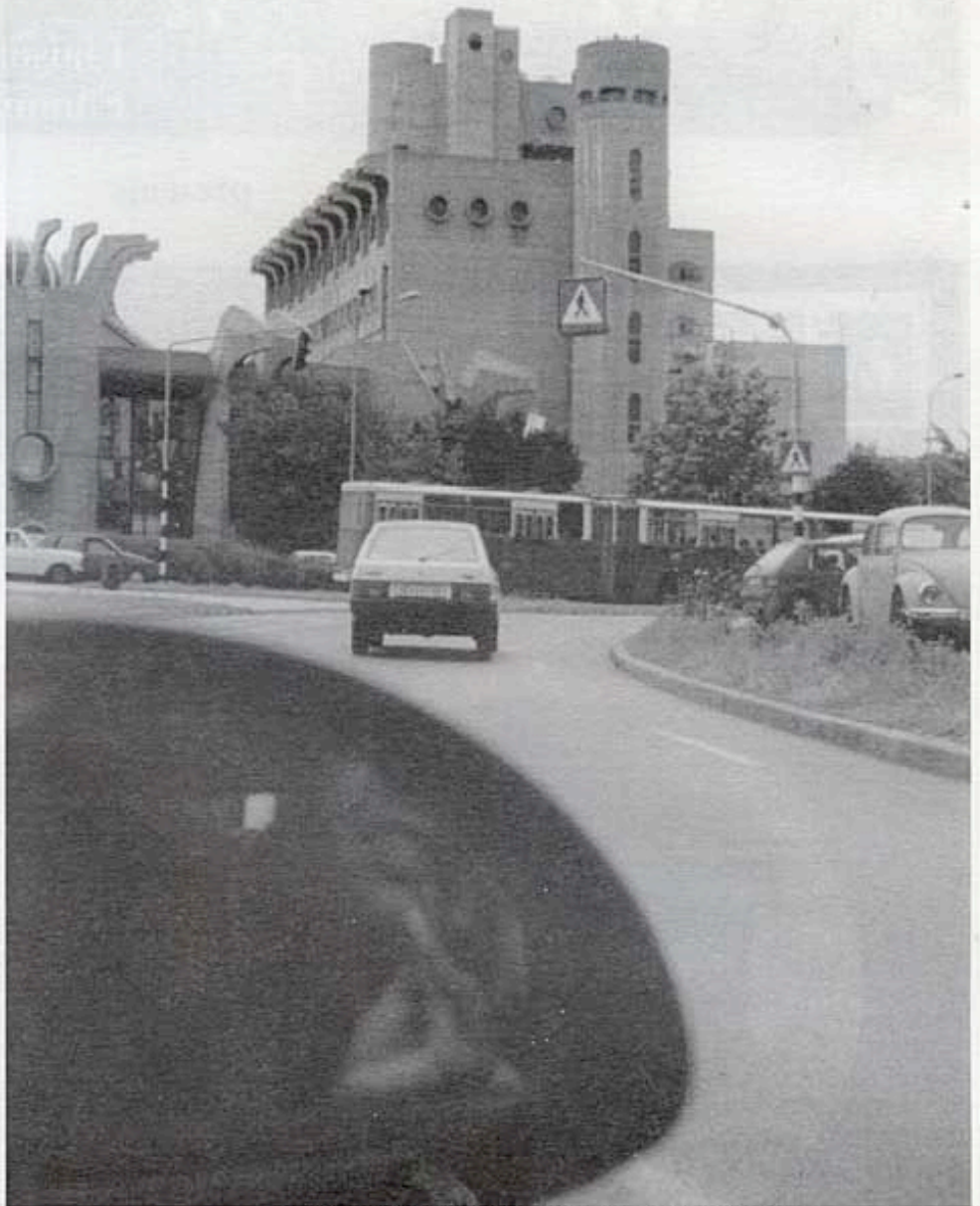
None of these filmmakers confront reality on a daily basis, either by exceptional circumstance or by inheritance, or by both. They all make their films using the saving grace of those that immediately respond with a helping hand, a hand all too familiar to those it helps.

That is my impression, although a purely subjective one. After all, I looked under rocks and cobblestones for young struggling filmmakers of the calibre of us here at LIFT, but could not find them for the life of me. They probably exist but their existence is not acknowledged and if I had more time perhaps I could have tracked them down.

Those putting up a struggle trying to scrape up some antiquated equipment to shoot on expired film stock handed over from the vaults of some friend of a friend of an uncle of a former commie propaganda cinematographer, are elusive and invisible. Those whose diverse visions and thoughts can never vitalize a frame, let alone a feature film, remain voiceless for the time being.

As Mr. Aleksandar Stankovski put it:  
"What is life in comparison to eternity but one moment, and we live that moment fully and unconditionally."

*Sandra Danilovic is a struggling Canadian-Macedonian filmmaker living in Toronto.*



The Capital of Skopje, Macedonia (Post Office)

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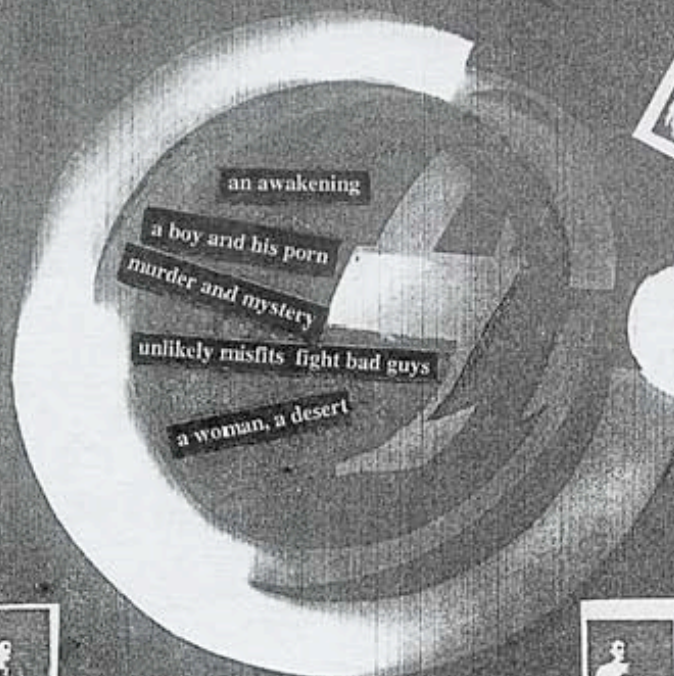
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