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THE LIAISON OF INDEPENDENT
FILMMAKERS OF TORONTO
NOV/DEC 1998 VOL. 18 NO. 6

the independent world
goes to Portugal
& Vienna,
Mike Hoolboom's Panic Bodies,
& reviews, reviews...



**THE LIAISON OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS
OF TORONTO**
Nov/Dec, 1998
Volume 18, No. 6

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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 information and access to equipment and facilities. LIFT hosts a program of workshops and monthly screenings and it provides access to information regarding funding sources, festival and grant deadlines and other related matters.

LIFT is supported by its membership, the Canada Council (Media Arts Section), the Ontario Arts Council, 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 necessarily reflect the views of the editors, the Co-op or members of the Board of Directors. Letters to the editor can be sent c/o LIFT, 37 Hanna Avenue, Suite 301, Toronto, Ontario M6K 1W5, Phone, 588-6444; Fax, 588-7017.

LIFT's website address is:

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

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

DEPARTMENTS:

Critical dates & dubious deadlines pg>>4-5
upcoming festival deadlines•
calls for submissions•

LIFT News pg>>6-7
new members•news•funding & grant
deadlines•liftgear & machinations•

Who/What Dec 1998 pg>>6-7
Reviews pg>>17-18
& 21

ADS pg>>23

FEATURES:

The Independent World:

Lift in Portugal
by Nick Curcin pg>>9

Lift in Vienna
by Rubba Nadda pg>>19-20

Interview with Mike Hoolboom
by Larissa Fan & Bobby Nijjar pg>>12-14
& 22

Financing Your Film:

Brave Next Wave
by Pedram Fouladian pg>>10

Going Fishing
by Karen Levenson-Code pg>>11

Wide Focus
by SiSi Penaloza pg>>15-16

pg>2



THE CANADA COUNCIL
FOR THE ARTS
SINCE 1957

LE CONSEIL DES ARTS
DU CANADA
DEPUIS 1957



Some of you may not be aware of why LIFT was closed on December 1. LIFT closes every year on that date to commemorate Day Without Art, a day held in remembrance of artists who have died of AIDS, and to raise AIDS awareness. Museums, galleries and cultural centres internationally mark Day Without Art in different ways: some close for the day, some shroud artworks or put up AIDS-prevention information in their place, some black out their websites. Many artists at LIFT deal with AIDS issues in their work. Recent films to look for include Phil Hoffman and Wayne Salazar's *Destroying Angel*, a portrait in part about Wayne's struggle with AIDS, and Mike Hoolboom's *Letters from Home and Positive*.

This issue of the Newsletter includes an interview with Mike on the occasion of the release of his new book and film, as well as information on some funding possibilities for features (always a headache), inspiring tales of LIFT-ers abroad with their films, and a report on Diversi's Wide Focus conference.

Last issue we bid a fond farewell to Barb Mainguy, who worked hard for three years to bring you a great newsletter. Best of luck to Barb in her job at POV Magazine. This is my first issue as editor, and I couldn't have done it without the help of the LIFT staff, especially Deanna and Lisa, the Newsletter Committee, and all the writers. Watch for next issue's grand celebration of the New Year, as we look forward by going back in time to bring you the best of past tech and how-to articles.

I just want to remind everyone that contributing to the Newsletter is a great way to get your volunteer hours, whether through sitting on the Newsletter Committee, writing an article, proof reading, or taking photos. Suggestions and comments are always welcome.

Best wishes for the holidays, and see you in 1999!

The 1998 Production Grant Jury was comprised of the following LIFT filmmakers:

Neil Burns, Jason Romilly, Kwan Ho-Tse, Carolyn Wong and Elizabeth Yake.
Of the 56 application forms picked up, 25 members applied, and 9 received support.

CLINT TOURANGEAU

\$1500 cash and \$600 equipment credit
SHADES OF BLACK - PART ONE
Shades of Black - Part One is the first part of an autobiographical series, and is set in Edmonton during the heavy metal mid-1980s. The dorky filmmaker ponders his desire for his bad-ass cousin while trying to surmount the primordial adolescent challenge - getting laid.

JEFF STERNE

\$890 equipment credit
SCRAMBLED PORN
This documentary takes a look at the 'humanics' of the communication revolution. In traditional documentary, both story and fact are used simultaneously to convey information. But in *Scrambled Porn: Analysis #1 and #2*, story is dissected from the factual, creating an interesting look at how documented information is conveyed.

Big Announcement! 1998 LIFT Grant Recipients

RUBA NADDA

\$1000 cash and \$1000 equipment credit
THINGS LEFT UNSAID
An Arab mother takes out her anger, on learning of her father's death, on her family.

MARK WIHAK

\$890 equipment credit
ECSTASY
This is the story of Stacey, a Rave Girl living in end of the millennium suburbia, her meeting of God, and the miraculous events that follow.

DARYA FARHA

\$500 equipment credit and \$150 office credit
STRANGE ANGELS
The muscled human body struggles against a disciplinary power that is simultaneously ubiquitous and silent. Muscles strain and sweat pours as four figures of varying ages and genders try to escape the bonds of meaning.

CAROLYNNE HEW

\$880 equipment credit
SWELL
A short film about bodily swellings, irresistible itches, and girls, girls, girls.

HOPE THOMPSON

\$1000 cash
SWITCH
Switch is set in Toronto in 1949, and evokes the 1940s gangster film genre. It tells the story of two telephone operators as they struggle to realize their love for each other against various personal, social, and even violent obstacles.

JASON MCBRIDE

\$1000 cash
STARGAZE
Set in 1952, *Stargaze* is about 18 year old Derek's painful aversion therapy, designed to "cure" his homosexuality, and refuge under artificial skies.

ALLYSON MITCHELL

\$500 cash, \$240 equipment credit and \$150 office equipment credit
T.V. DID THIS TO ME
Some people are too attached to their televisions. *T.V. Did This to Me* is a 3 minute film that animates one girl's intimate afternoon with her T.V. set.

On the Cover:
still from *State of Dogs* dirs. Peter Brosens and Dorjkhandyn Turmunkh included as part of the 27th Film Festival at Figueira Da Foz, review pg.

upcoming festival deadlines: *Local* deadlines

FESTIVAL /LOCATION /DATE:	DEADLINE:	TELEPHONE:	E-MAIL:	WEBSITE:
SIG FESTIVAL 99 - FESTIVAL DU FILM DE GLISSE DE GRENOBLE Grenoble, Fr. 03/5-8/99	12/20/98	33 0 4 76 95 30 70	autrans@alpes.net.fr	
CIFC HOT DOCS Toronto, ON 05/5-9/99	12/31/98	(416) 656 3797	debn@interlog.com	
NEW YORK UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL New York, Ny 03/10-14/99	1/1/99	212 925 3440		www.nyuff.com
TAMPERE INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL Tampere 03/10-14/99	1/5/99	358-31-213 0034	film.festival@tt.tampere.fi	http://www.tampere.fi/festival/film/
BRUSSELS INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FANTASY, THRILLER & SCIENCE FICTION FILMS Bruxelles, Bel. 03/12-27/99	1/6/99	32-2-201-17-13		http://www.biff.org
SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, GOLDEN GATE AWARDS San Francisco, CA 04/22 - 05/06/99	1/7/99	(415) 929-5014	sfiff@sfiff.org	
MEDIAWAVE '98 - INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF VISUAL ARTS 04/26-05/01/99	1/10/99	+36 96 315 664, 328 888	filmgyor@interlog.com mediawave@arrabonet.gyor.hu	www.interlog.com/~filmgyor
LOS ANGELES ASIAN PACIFIC FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL Los Angeles, CA May 1999	1/15/99	(213) 680-4462 x68	visual@vc.apnet.org	www.vc.apanet.org/~viscom/
MISSOULA INT'L WILDLIFE FILM FESTIVAL Missoula, Montana 04/17-24/99	1/15/99	(406) 728-9380	iwff@wildlifefilms.org	www.wildlifefilms.org
TAOS TALKING PICTURE FESTIVAL Taos, Nm 04/15-18/99	1/15/99	505-751 0637	ttpix@taosnet.com	www.taosnet.com/ttpix/
NYON INT'L DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL Geneva, Switz., 04/19-25/99	1/31/99	41 22 798 77 00	docnyon@iprolink.Ch	
WOMEN MAKE WAVES FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL Taipei 04/10-05/02/99	1/31/99	886-2-3653707 ext. 502	bleu@yuanliou.ylib.com.tw	
NEW YORK ANIMATION FESTIVAL New York, Ny April 1999	2/1/99	212 982 7781	nyafest@yahoo.com	www.members.tripod.com/~nyafest/home.html
Splice This! Toronto, On 06/18-20/99	3/31/99	416 537 2256	coldsore@interlog.com or kobrien@oise.utoronto.ca	

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

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

calls for submissions:

Local:

PLEASURE DOME is seeking submissions for the annual members curated **NEW TORONTO WORKS SHOW**. Please send preview tape or film (8mm & 16 mm) under 10 minutes to: Pleasure Dome's New Toronto Works Show, 6 Alcina Ave., Toronto, Ontario, M6G 2E8 (phone: 656-5577/ e-mail: pdome@ican.net) or drop-off to: V Tape, 401 Richmond St. West #452 before **February 1st, 1999**. Show date March 1999.

The **DESH PARDESH INTRA-NATIONAL FESTIVAL/CONFERENCE** is currently seeking submissions for its upcoming festival. Works from the following disciplines/areas are eligible: Film and Video, Literature and Spoken Word, Dance and Performance Art, Music and Theatre, New Media and Visual Arts, Panels and Workshops. Works must be independently produced and artists must retain editorial control over their work. All works must be produced after January 1, 1996. For more information contact Desh Pardesh, Suite 450, 401 Richmond Street West, Toronto, ON, Canada, M5V 3A8. 416-340-0485, fax 416 340-1418, email: desh@ican.net. **DEADLINE: February 5, 1999.**

THE BLACK FILM AND VIDEO NETWORK is a not-for profit arts organization which promotes and supports the development, production, and distribution of independent Black film, television and video professionals in Canada. The Network is seeking an African-Canadian screenwriter to conduct the national Triads screenwriting workshop in "An Introduction to Screenwriting," which will be held in Toronto for five consecutive days in March 1999. The Black Film & Video Network gratefully acknowledges the support of the Canada Council for the Arts. Interested candidates should forward a resume with a covering letter outlining their experience to: Barbra Hopkinson, c/o The Black Film & Video Network, 2 College Street, Suite #213, Toronto, Ontario, M5G 1K3 or you can fax to Barbra Hopkinson, (416) 490-8393. **CLOSING DATE: December 31, 1998**

calls for submissions: dubious deadlines

SHAMELESS SHORTS: This alternative 1/2 hour program on WTN is dedicated to presenting independent short films and videos by women from Canada and around the world. Preference is for work 15 mins. or less. There is no submission limit. License fees will be negotiated upon acceptance. Send VHS tape and support materials to: Liz Janzen, Producer, Shameless Shorts, WTN, PO Box 158, Station L, Winnipeg, Man. R3H 0Z5. Ph.: 204.783.5116, email: ljanzen@wtn.ca
Courtesy of Cineworks Bulletin

GALLERY TPW welcomes proposals for its 1999 exhibition schedule. Gallery TPW presents exhibitions of contemporary photography and photo-based work, in a diversity of forms, by local, national and international artists in various stages of their careers. Exhibitions are programmed in a continuous five week cycle from September through June. Submissions should include: 10-20 slides, numbered and labeled, optional: 10-20 prints, corresponding slide and/or print list, exhibition proposal, artist's statement, resume, press reviews, articles where possible, dates the work will be available for exhibition, & SASE. For more complete info. contact: Gallery TPW, 80 Spadina Avenue, Suite 310, Toronto, ON, M5V 2J3, (416) 504-4242, email: glirtpw@interlog.com
DEADLINE: January 30.

THE CANADIAN FILM CENTRE (CFC) is now recruiting new residents for the 1999 film and television training programmes, including the Film Resident Programme, the Television Resident Programme and the Professional Screenwriting Programme. The Film Resident Programme's deadline for the August, 1999 session is **January 30, 1999**. The Film Resident Programme (Directors' Lab, Producers' Lab, Writers' Lab, Editors' Lab) is the Centre's core film programme, training up to eight filmmakers in each discipline. It runs full-time from August to November, and it encourages independent filmmakers to hone their creative vision, their craft and their business acumen in an intensively collaborative, professional environment. Visit their website at www.cdnfilmcentre.com or contact (416) 445-1446 ext 800 for further information and an application package.

"NO PLACE LIKE HOME: CULTURAL ANXIETY AND MARTHA STEWART LIVING." We are editing an anthology of visual and written texts that interrogate, critique, celebrate, inquire into, parody, subvert, question, read, analyze, mythologize, interact with, idolize, despise and most of all, give new insight into the Martha Stewart phenomenon. We are interested in (b/w or colour) visual media: photographs, paintings,

film, video, sculpture, installations, comic strips, collages, and so forth. Academic and critical papers should not exceed 35 pages, and should conform to MLA style. We are also interested in scripts, short stories, poetry, jokes, internet phenomena, emails, performance pieces. This anthology has been accepted for publication. Please send completed work, visual work and CV to BOTH of the following: Zoe Newman, Sociology & Equity Studies, OISE/University of Toronto, 252 Bloor St. W., Toronto, Ont. M5S 1V6 CANADA and Kyla Wazana Tompkins, c/o Program in Modern Thought & Literature, Building 250, Rm. 251F, Stanford University, Stanford, California, 94305-2020. If you need more information please direct all inquiries by email to: znewman@oise.utoronto.ca AND kwazana@leland.stanford.edu
DEADLINE: January 15, 1999.

International:

INTERNATIONAL CONVERGENCE: THE JOURNAL OF RESEARCH INTO NEW MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES Special issue for Winter 1999 on young people and new media technologies, guest-edited by David Buckingham and Julian Sefton-Green. "Debates on this issue typically invoke contrasting visions of the future," Convergence states. "On the one hand, there are those who celebrate the autonomy of the new generation of 'cyberkids'; while on the other, there are those who lament the decline of traditional notions of childhood into a technological dystopia." They welcome submissions relating to the cultural, educational, economic and political dimensions of this field, particularly those based on empirical research into young people's uses of digital media. Send proposals and submissions to either: Dr. David Buckingham, Reader in Education, Institute of Education, University of London, 20 Bedford Way, London, WC1H 0AL, UK. Tel: +44 171 612 6515, Fax: +44 171 612 6177 E-mail: d.buckingham@ioe.ac.uk or Dr. Julian Sefton-Green, Media Education Development Officer, Weekend Arts College, Interchange Studios Dalby Street, London NW5 3NQ, UK. Tel: +44 171 284 1861, Fax: +44 171 482 4727, E-mail: sefton@home77.demon.co.uk OR julian@wac.co.uk All other editorial inquiries, general proposals and submissions should be directed to: Julia Knight/Alexis Weedon, Editors, Convergence, School of Media Arts, University of Luton, 75 Castle Street, Luton, LU1 3AJ, UK. Tel: +44 1582 34111, fax: + 44 1582 489014, COPY DEADLINES: Refereed research articles: 30 April 1999, Debates: 30 June 1999, Feature reports: 30 May 1999.

DUTV-CABLE 54. This Philadelphia based educational cable access station accepts independent work for broadcast on an ongoing basis. All genres and lengths are considered. DUTV also produces Unquote Television, a non-profit 1/2 hour program dedicated to exposing innovative independent short film and video. Unquote TV is now accepting tapes for its 8th season. Works submitted should be less than 28 min. and either in 3/4" or 1/2". All genres. Contact DUTV-Cable 54, 3141 Chestnut Street, Building 9B, Room 4026, Philadelphia, PA 19104. Ph.: 215.895.2927, email: dutv@post.drexel.edu *Courtesy of Cineworks Bulletin*

CALL FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS: The PHOTOWORKS GALLERY in Brooklyn, NY has ongoing calls for submissions. To submit work for group exhibits, attach no more than 5 images in a low resolution JPEG format to an email message to efish@pipeline.com Include the show title in the subject of your message. Provide a brief description of your photographic interest or experience and your contact information. If you are interested in selling your work, provide details of the photographs, such as actual dimensions, format and price. For solo exhibits, send a query to either the email address below or by snail mail to Ellen Fish, The Photoworks Gallery, 134 Lincoln Place, Brooklyn, NY 11217. The Gallery is delighted to review portfolios and seeks to collaborate with photographers in creating a solo show.

Visit the web site at <http://www.photo-works.com/> for more submission details and for information about upcoming shows. *Courtesy of Current* www.artswire.org/current.html

QUEER ARTICULATIONS 1999, A FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL to be held at the university February 25 - 27, 1999. This event marks the continuation of an annual tradition of bringing queer films to the Princeton community. Please submit work in 1/2" video, although festival screening formats include 16 mm, VHS, and 3/4". Work may be submitted in any form or genre: narrative, experimental, animation, music video, features, shorts, etc. For each work, please fill out a separate sheet and include any pertinent material, such as photos, press clippings, or personal statements. All tapes must be NTSC compatible. All materials will be returned after the festival only if return packaging and postage is included. Please label all tapes with your name and address. Please include the title, director/producer, distributor (if any), address, phone/FAX, e-mail address, running time, festival screening format (preferably 16mm or video) and a prose description. Entrants will be notified by 18 January 1999. There is no entry fee. Contact: Contact: Film Festival curator Nicholas Salvato at nsalvato@princeton.edu
DEADLINE: Dec 31, 1998

new members:

Welcome new members
as of nov 98:

Mickson Addo
Kellie Anderson
Stuart Andrews
Cristina Antonio
Pamela Bayne
David Blomme
Ben Bruhmuller
Anna-Maria Castro
Catrain
Matt Conacher
Paul Distefano
Corey Joseph
Jim Lobo
David Mackenzie
Jeff Maher
Justin McNabb
Jane Mountain
David Mueck
Stephanie Myers
Anthony Pangalos
Spiro Pilarinos
Susan Rome
Hala Sabbah
Laurie Stevenson
Melanie Wheaton

calls for submissions:

HALLWALLS CONTEMPORARY ARTS CENTER, one of the most active and programmatically diverse artists' organizations, is accepting submissions from emerging and under-represented artists in Western New York and throughout the United States and Canada. They emphasize supporting experimentation and new projects. They are equally committed to presenting the work of nationally recognized artists who have not had the opportunity to present their work to Buffalo-area audiences. Hallwalls is located in an 11,000 square foot space in the Tri-Main Center on Buffalo's East Side. Hallwalls has three galleries, an 85 seat cinema, a 95 seat theater, video editing facilities, video viewing room, and video library. All artists who are invited to present their work are paid a professional fee for their services. Transportation of artwork is arranged by mutual agreement between the artist and Hallwalls' Visual Arts Director.
DEADLINE: Ongoing

ART IN GENERAL will be reviewing submissions of works by individual artists as well as exhibition proposals for their 1999-2000 programs. Local, national, and international artists are encouraged to submit their work. Art in General, a nonprofit contemporary arts organization, has a "unique venue where new artwork is created and presented through exhibitions, installations, residencies, public programs, and publications." For an Application and Guidelines, send a SASE to: Future Programs, Art in General, 79 Walker Street, New York, NY 10013-3523. Web Site: <http://www.artingeneral.org> **DEADLINE:** Ongoing

D.FILM is now accepting films for its 1998/1999 series of live shows, which will include stops in New York, San Francisco, LA, San Diego and more. Dates for specific cities will be announced soon. They're looking for innovative films made with computers and other forms of new technology. This includes 2D and 3D computer animation, non-linear editing, digital cameras, etc ... No submission fees. Information and entry forms are available on the D.FILM website, www.dfilm.mpl.net/submit.html. **DEADLINE:** Ongoing

FILM STUDIES POSITION: We seek a scholar whose research and teaching interests/expertise will include one or more of the following: representation and identity; national or indigenous cinema; systems of film production and reception; rhetorical dimensions of film. Ability to teach undergraduate introductory film production is desirable. Contact: Michael Morgan, Department of Communication, Machmer Hall, University of Massachusetts, Amherst MA 01003
DEADLINE: Jan 4, 1999

**funding &
grant
deadlines:**

CANADA COUNCIL
1 800 263 5588 X5060

Travel Grants

Anytime

**Creation/Production Grants to
Professional Artists - Photography**
March 1/99

Grants for First Productions in Media Arts
April 1/99

**Grants to Film Artists - Creative
Development & Production Grants**
April 1/99, November 1/99

**INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION
FUND/COGECO FUND**
977-8966

Cogeco Fund:

April 1/99.

Independent Production Fund:
February 15/99, April 15/99

**CANADA TELEVISION AND CABLE
PRODUCTION FUND EQUITY
INVESTMENT PROGRAM**
(514) 283-6363

started September 9, 1996

**ABORIGINAL FILMMAKER ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM**

973-3012

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

ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
961-1660

First Film/Video

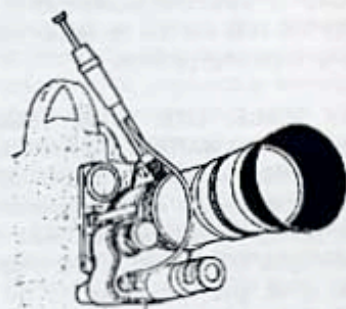
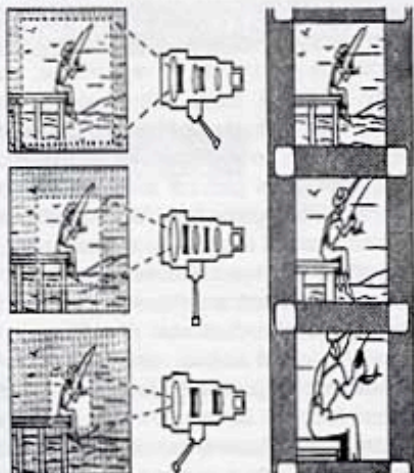
January 15, 1999

Artists' Film and Video
April 15/99, October 1/99

**NFB FILMMAKER ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM (FAP)**
973-3012

April 1, 1999

Zoom lenses make tracking effects possible without moving the camera. As the lever on the lens barrel is moved to and fro (or radially), lens elements move and continuously alter the focal length. The lens aperture remains the same whatever the zoom setting. The viewfinder is a through-the-lens reflex type without parallax error.



news:

HOLIDAY CLOSING: The LIFT offices will be closed for the holidays and for equipment maintenance from **December 19 to January 3**. If you need equipment access during this time please speak to Lisa or Roberto.

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 (6:15pm @LIFT): **January 5, February 2, & March 2.**

LIFT'S PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE is looking for new members! Looking for a way to make up your volunteer hours? Committee members receive 20 vol. hours for committee service. Next meetings are **Dec. 15, Jan. 19, Feb. 15, & Mar. 15** (6:15pm @ Future's Bakery on Queen). Call Deanna to RSVP.

LOOKING FOR VIDEO TAPES FOR A NEW LIFT LIBRARY OF MEMBERS' FILMS - The goal for the new library is to: 1. create a resource for the Programming Committee to view new and past works of LIFT members; 2. to establish another means of presenting LIFT members films to the membership. Members of the co-op would be able to view VHS dubbed films on site. If you are interested in donating a copy of your works to LIFT call Deanna @ 588-6444. **LIFT will not lend/screen members films to non-members, nor does it intend to attempt any means of distribution.

more:

liftgear & machinations:

LIFT is looking to compliment its existing Animation stand/optical printer with the purchase a **J-K Optical Printer** in early 1999. We would like to purchase a used one (preferably in Canada), and have been looking on the internet, etc. But, if any of you readers have any leads on a used J-K, please let us know. Call Roberto or Lisa at 588-6444.

The **Workshop Committee** is looking for members! It is time to organize the upcoming series of workshops and we need input from the membership. If you would like to have your say in the type of workshops that LIFT organizes, please attend the next meeting on **Monday January 11** at 6 p.m., or contact Roberto at 588-6444. Remember, participants are compensated with volunteer hours for attending all committee meetings.

liftgear & machinations:

What's new with equipment @ LIFT?

!STUFF FOR SALE!

LIFT has a variety of used components for video editing available to anyone interested. The stuff includes:

- 1 JVC 3/4 inch tape recording deck
- 1 Echo lab... Model DV5 video switcher/wipes-keys etc
- 1 COX video processor 339N
- 1 Calaway edit controller
- 1 2 monitors (attached)

...and lots more including an apple computer, monitors and keyboards. Come on in and make us an offer!

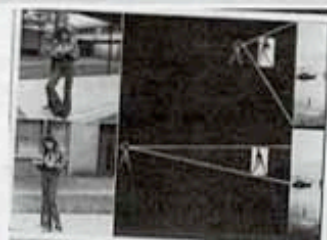
LIFT Needs A Good Carpenter!

As part of the Camera-less filmmaking workshop being offered this winter, LIFT is interested in constructing a combination light table/drafting table that would allow our members to easily paint on 16mm & 35mm clear leader. Please call Roberto or Lisa @ 588-6444 if you want to hammer away at your volunteer hours!

It's almost here...

LIFT will soon have a screening room available to members interested in viewing their 16mm or super 8 rushes. **Laurie Stevenson** (& Jazz) and **Derek Roemer** have done a wonderful job installing the heavy duty rods and curtains in the mezzanine. LIFT would also like to thank The Canadian Opera Company for their generous donation of fabric.

Many thanks to LIFT member **Gord Creelman** who salvaged 7 folding tables and 7 chairs from the back rooms of Traders and brought them to LIFT, where they are much appreciated.



ATTENTION ALL DIGITAL EDITING NITE OWLS

Effective immediately LIFT has lowered the hourly rate in the ProTools & Media 100 suites. Between the hours midnight and 8:00 A.M. The new rates are \$7/hr for full members and \$14/hr for associate members. To save even more money, members can prepay in advance and receive an additional 10% discount on their bill!

Did you know... that LIFT has **telephone technical support service for the Media 100**, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday to Friday. This service will be extended to 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, starting November 11, 1998. Take advantage of this service since we are paying for it. If you are planning to edit on the Media 100, be sure to check with the technical co-ordinators to be sure that there will be enough hard disk space for your project.

LIFT Orientation:

LIFT's orientation session will be on **Wednesday, Jan. 20, 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.

Correction: The photo identified as **Chris Gehman** and **Naomi Boxer** in last issue's Party of Parties spread is in fact **Brian Stockton** and **Tobi Lampard**. Sorry!

Who/What DEC 98:

PRODUCTION/ POST-PRODUCTION:

Hope Thompson, DOP **Jacques Raybaut** and a LIFT member-filled crew have completed principal photography for *Switch*, a film noir-ish tale of "love, loss, sex, switchboard operators and horse racing." Hope is editing on the Media 100 with **Josie Massarella**.

Chris McKay is wrapping up post-production on his 16mm claymation short, *Fries With That*, the story of a little girl and her family trying to deal with the fact that her brother is dying.

Tony Arnold is completing production of a short silent comedy shot on digital video. *Do Something!* is the story of a vain motorcyclist whose head is just too big!

Edwin Perez is finishing post on *Sunshine* (formerly *Names will Never Hurt Me*), a 23-minute drama shot in colour 16mm. The picture edit is locked and Edwin is working on the sound mix and score, which features original music as well as new songs by 3 different music producers/artists.

Darya Farha is currently in production on her film, *Strange Angels*, an experimental animation about the body's struggle against identity and meaning.

Igor Rados is producing and directing *Deja Vu, Deja Vu*, a half-hour drama about a woman who suffers from Alzheimer's. The film explores notions of grief, nostalgia and "the absurdity of a fast passing life". Igor expects to be finished shooting by Christmas.

Nada El-Yassir is in post-production on a 15-20 minute narrative film. *Sarab* is the story of one woman's search for a new way of doing things, a search that leads her back to her childhood.

Michael Caines has started shooting a short super-8 film, a tragedy about a clown alone in a room. He expects to complete *Stick* by the spring.



Michael Fitzgerald as "Mildred Maguire" in **Hope Thompson's Switch**

Kathleen Cummins is busy in pre-production for a dance film, *Dendrite*, featuring award-winning choreographer and dancer **Rebecca Todd**, as well as developing a feature-length script with funding from Telefilm. Kathleen's film *Emer, Banished to the Waves of the Sea* premiered at the Atlantic Film Festival in the Children's section, and will be broadcast on TVO and CBC's Reflections this winter.

Ian Thompson's film *The Three Lives of Kate* (co-written, directed and produced with **Karen Hanson**) is now in post-production. A dramatic short shot on 35mm, it focuses on the character **Kate** coming to terms with a psychiatric condition called Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (O.C.D.) during three periods of her life.

ON THE SCREEN:

LIFT films abroad: **Hope Thompson's It Happened in the Stacks** and **Mike Hoolboom's Positiv** screened in November as part of "Kanadians", an exchange programme between the Images Festival and Finland. The programme screened in Helsinki, Stockholm and Estonia.

CONGRATULATIONS to **Ruba Nadda** for winning the prize for Best Short International Film at the FICS in Chile for her film *Do nothing*. Ruba's 2 new shorts, *Laila* and *Slut*, had their world premiere at the Vienna International Film Festival. *Slut* has also been selected in the main programme of the 1999 Rotterdam Film Festival.



Edward Roy as "Ricky Admaral" in **Hope Thompson's Switch**



Catherine Glen (lead actor), **Igor Rados** (Director Producer) and **Laurier Harrison** (DOP) on the set of *Deja Vu, Deja Vu*.

LIFT members' films by **Sarah Abbott**, **Michael Caines**, **Chris Chong**, **Keith Cole** and **Kika Thorne** screened December 4 at the Phoebe Street Project as part of a programme called "Phantom Lover", curated by **Michael Caines**.

Jane Eun-Hee Kim's short film *Crickets* and **Ho-tse Kwan's Double Concerto** were programmed in the 2nd Annual Toronto Reel Asian Film Festival, which took place at the Royal and John Spotton Cinemas from November 26 - 28.

Sky Gilbert's I am the Camera, Dying just played at the Vancouver International Film Festival to rave reviews. Both *I am the Camera, Dying* and Sky's feature film *My Summer Vacation* are going to be released in video stores in the States this summer by Waterbearer Films.

STORYBOARD: LIFT is updating its database for the annual storyboard. If you have completed a film in the past year, please mail/fax/drop-off a brief description to LIFT (including title, format and length), or e-mail Larissa at fanburke@interlog.com. **Deadline: January 15.**

The Independent World: LIFT in Portugal

A report on the 27th INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL at FIGUEIRA DA FOZ, PORTUGAL. by Nick Curcin



I think there is some kind of a rule which says that whenever you feel most deprived, disappointed, cast away and cast out, and you feel trapped with no where to go, and you feel that you have to give up everything, then, something will happen that will turn things around for you. And once again you will feel energized, you will find strength to sit in the dark and write, and fight demons, and go on, and on, and on.

Well, that is what happened to me. Last year I completed my ultra-low-budget feature, which than played successfully at the Montreal World Film Festival. It also played several times at the Bloor Cinema and it did well. But after that, bust. Nada. Zero. Nothing.

And then one day, out of the blue, my distributor calls me and tells me that he has got not one but two pieces of good news for me: he sold *My Script Doctor* to Bravo, and he got an invitation for me to travel to Portugal, to the 27th International Film Festival at Figueira da Foz. Of course I couldn't be more happy, and I still am.

Festival Internacional da Figueira da Foz features films which are progressive, avant-garde, and socially relevant in nature. Except for their own (Portuguese films), Canadian features and short films were the most prominently promoted and featured by the festival's director, Mr. Hose Vieira Marques, who holds the highest regard for Canada in general, and Canadian films and filmmakers in particular. Therefore, it is one festival which LIFT members should not miss applying to. (This year the festival dates were September 3-13th, while the deadline for submissions was at the end of June.)

Figueira da Foz is a resort town on the Atlantic coast. It is located some two hundred kilometers north of Lisbon, and some seventy kilometers south of the town of Porto, which also features an international airport. The festival screenings take place at the local casino, a magnificent facility situated at the centre of Figueira da Foz, across from some of the best restaurants and cafés, which stay open 'til 4am. The restaurants have excellent food, the prices are more than afford-



still from *Limonada em Outubro* dir. Flora Cohen

able, and the food coupons given to filmmakers from the festival more than cover the cost.

The Casino has two first class theaters, and the screenings run from 10am till 2am, to the delight of filmmakers and the general public alike. Without exception, all screenings are well attended. The audience is very appreciative of the visiting filmmakers, and the festival director takes every care to introduce the guests and engage the audience in constructive conversations.

All in all, the Festival International at Figueira da Foz is probably one of the rare festivals which is so friendly to us. This year it featured almost as many Canadian films as the Montreal or Toronto Film Festivals, if not more. It doesn't hurt to mention that the selection jury awarded five medals to honour distinguished films and filmmakers. I was one of the recipients, as the selection jury honoured *My Script Doctor*.

Well, that is what helped me recharge my batteries in order to go on making ultra-low budget feature films.



BRAVE NEXT WAVE

FINDING THE MONEY: Finishing Funds from Next Wave Films
by Pedram Fouladian



No one can deny that independent filmmaking is filled with tales of sacrifice and persistence, a fact that many publicists and distributors have capitalized on to sell their films and filmmakers. But not everyone speaking about their experience is longing for sensation — there are many true witnesses to the ups-and-downs of no budget filmmaking. One of them is Peter Broderick, who has followed and worked with no-budget independent filmmaking for a couple of decades. On September 12, sponsored by the OFDC skills development and marketing initiative group, Peter Broderick spoke at Innis College. A nice break for all of us from the hectic quarters of the film festival. The following is sketched from memory, I regret if there are any slight errors in certain facts.

The first time I met Peter Broderick was a year before. He came to the 1997 edition of TIFF to talk about his newly founded company, Next Wave Films. Based on his experience with and understanding of low-budget filmmakers, he pitched his company to the Independent Film Channel (which was itself a new game in town) and got funded by them.

Next Wave basically provides finishing funds for films shot on a budget of less than \$200,000. Next Wave then acts as the sales agent for the film and takes it into the world market. As a worst case scenario, a Next Wave handled film can end up in ten

million homes through the IFC. Also, accessing funds through NextWave allows the filmmakers to graduate to being financed by the IFC, which has as its mission to work with established directors (the first film they did was John Sayles' *Men with Guns*). Broderick is quick to remind you that when working with an ultra-low budget, making a genre film is an uphill battle. He is interested in films where the director has a voice, both stylistically and in content.

Whereas last year he mentioned that he would support films shot on video, at the Innis session Peter Broderick strictly chose "the Digital Revolution" as his topic. He wanted to describe the technological advances and the possibilities for low budget filmmaking (Next Wave represented one film at the fest this year, the British production *The Following*, which was not shot on DVC). This year four films in the festival were shot on Digital Video Cameras: *Cruise*, *Windhorse* (a film shot under duress in Tibet), Hal Hartley's *Book of Life*, and Thomas Vinterberg's Cannes winner *The Celebration*, based on the manifesto of Dogme 95 (printed in the Newsletter two years ago). This indicates the accessibility of these high end products on the market, as well as filmmakers' awareness of it. Peter Broderick called *The Celebration* "the Birth of a Nation" of digital filmmaking which, because of its present status, will open the minds and the eyes of industry professionals towards work coming from that stream. (*The Celebration* opened in theatres in November.)

Film publications have seen a flurry of ads and articles about High Definition Television cameras, and Sony's state-of-the-art transfer system to 35mm. Peter Broderick cautioned against this method, as it costs too much. If you have that sort of money, go ahead and shoot on 35mm (NB. Before the session, I found out that the only Sony EBR system, I think that's what they called it, exists in Culver City, CA, which is out of reach for low budget Canadian filmmakers).

However, digital systems allow filmmakers to produce features on a very small budget (he showed clips from a \$900 movie), and use that

as entrance into the industry. Also, DV allows for practice. Broderick noted that filmmakers have actually improved from one DV produced film to the other. He was particularly impressed with the image quality, which even in 35mm transfer looked good (some people I talked to at the festival didn't believe me when I told them that *Cruise* was shot on video). Interestingly, by the year 2000 the Sundance festival will have some DV projectors installed that can project impressive image quality onto a smaller screen.

Having said all this, Broderick mentioned the interesting point that the idea that celluloid film is going to disappear in the next couple of years is a misconception. He mentioned Terrence Malick, who could not have made *Days of Heaven* on video today or in ten years. He encourages people to shoot on 35mm or 16mm if they have a couple of hundred thousand dollars at their disposal. The choice of DVC should be governed either by aesthetic (*The Celebration*) or logistic (*Windhorse*) factors.

I found the presentation quite enlightening, and maybe to a certain degree liberating, knowing that there are always ways of making your film. Of course, there is a flip side to that coin: Next Wave Films receives an average of 80 films a month, and that number is expected to double within a year. They have the means to provide finishing funds for only four films. If they like your film and cannot pitch in cash, they can refer you to someone else. It seems to me that although the production medium has been "democratized", the receiver end of it hasn't.

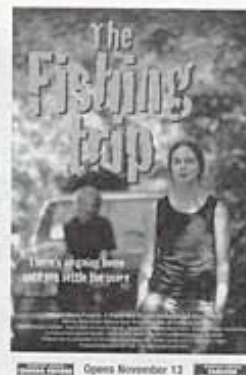
Filmmakers interested in approaching Next Wave Films should call in once they are about to go to picture. In this way the project is entered in their database. Do not send scripts, as they make their decisions based on what is shot.

Contact info:

Next Wave Films
2510 7th Street, Suite E.
Santa Monica, CA 90405
e-mail: paradigm@earthlink.net
phone: (310) 392-1720

GOING FISHING: GETTING TV TO FINANCE YOUR FIRST FEATURE

Adding It Up II: "Features on TV" Panel
by Karen Levenson-Code



Getting a broadcast license can be an important part of an independent producer's budget. In fact, once a broadcast license is obtained, numerous other funding sources become available. Yet how does an emerging producer attract a broadcaster? To help, the OFDC and the Canadian Independent Film Caucus put together an evening panel of industry professionals from the broadcast, distribution and government funding arenas to discuss the opportunities made available through television.

The panel, part of the Adding It Up! series, comprised both ends of the professional spectrum and included: Anna Newallo, first time feature producer; Scott Garvie, CFTPA board member and vice chair of the Ontario Producer's Panel; John Fulton, director of Telefilm's feature film unit; Dan Lyon, vice president of distribution and marketing for Motion International Inc.; and Brian Freeman, executive in charge of production for movies and mini-series at the CBC.

While the panel focused on funding both large and small budget movies, the most interesting part of the evening was the discussion of low budget features. Low budget features (under one million dollars) are often more difficult to raise money for than higher budget ones, because lower production values make them more difficult to sell abroad. While a low budget feature may have a great script and wonderful Canadian actors, if it doesn't have high production values or star attractions, it may never find a distributor. Disheartening as this may be, some low budget Canadian films do get made. Here's an example of one that did:

The Fishing Trip, a low budget Canadian feature distributed by Mongrel Media, and recently premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival, is a prime example of how independent filmmakers can take advantage of the broadcast dollars currently

available through Telefilm, The Movie Network, and other funding sources. Co-produced by first time producer Anna Newallo and first time feature director Amnon Buchbinder, *The Fishing Trip* was scripted by an unknown writer, then twenty-one year old York University student Michelle Lovretta.

Originally, Buchbinder had wanted to produce a feature script he had written as a resident at the Canadian Film Centre. The script, an apocalyptic tale with a hefty budget, would require significant funding. Buchbinder had received grants from the Canada Council and the Ontario Arts Council, totalling \$65,000, but he soon realized it would not be enough money to shoot his script. He wrote a letter to the arts councils asking to transfer his grant money to another script. They agreed.

While teaching screenwriting at York University, Buchbinder had read a script about two sisters who confront their incestuous father while on a fishing trip. The script, a road movie, appealed to Buchbinder. What's more, he knew he could shoot it for \$65,000. He optioned the script from Lovretta, and began to work with her to strengthen the narrative. Once it was polished, Buchbinder gave the script to long-time friend, Camelia Frieberg, who agreed to come on board as executive producer. Buchbinder still needed a partner who could work with him on a day-to-day basis, so Frieberg suggested Newallo.

Prior to Newallo joining *The Fishing Trip* production team, Buchbinder had gone to several broadcasters, including the CBC, hoping to gain a broadcast license. They all turned him down. His last option was CITY TV. He sent his script to Jay Switzer, vice-president of programming, in a car glove compartment, along with a map, a flashlight, and other road gear. Several months later when Newallo joined, Buchbinder had still not heard from CITY TV. Newallo contacted the broadcaster and was told that CITY had already committed that year's production funds to other projects — the only way they would take on *The Fishing Trip* was "if Jay loved the script." Switzer, who had not yet read the script, was heading to L.A. He promised to read it on his flight. On Monday Newallo called the station. Good news — Jay loved the script. CITY TV came on board one month before shooting.

Newallo's next job was to seek help from companies sympathetic to independent filmmakers. Production Services and Casablanca Sound agreed to provide her with equipment and ser-

vices on deferral, and key crew agreed to come on at well-below union rates. For non-key crew, Buchbinder offered his students an excellent way to gain experience. *The Fishing Trip* was shot on location throughout July, 1998.

But \$65,000 and deferrals only go so far. Newallo did not have enough money to process the rushes (fortunately, cinematographer Derek Rogers did a neg test and spot check to make sure the film was properly exposed) and Buchbinder and Newallo had to appeal to family, friends and industry connections for loans and free equipment. Buchbinder obtained a private loan to process the film and screen the rushes, and Newallo gained free access to a D-Vision editing system. They proceeded to the fine cut stage before again running out of money.

Knowing they needed to package the film, they put together a ten minute trailer and showed it to investors. Telefilm and The Movie Network, TMN, seemed interested. TMN's offer was too low, however, and Buchbinder and Newallo decided to reject it, hoping that they could do better. Telefilm administers the Equity Investment Program of the Canada Television and Cable Production Fund, CTCPF, but to access this fund, *The Fishing Trip* needed a distributor as well as a broadcaster. Frieberg had shown the script to her friend, Hussain Amarshi, the head of Mongrel Media. Originally Amarshi had turned it down, but, impressed by the fine cut, he agreed to distribute the film. Mongrel Media normally specializes in distributing foreign films — *The Fishing Trip* is its first Canadian feature. Buchbinder then went back to TMN with the fine cut. TMN made a better offer, which Buchbinder and Newallo accepted. Buchbinder applied to the Canada Council for a completion grant which enabled him to blow up the print from 16 to 35mm. *The Fishing Trip* opened in theatres in November.

While there are lots of disappointments and rejections along the road to making a low budget feature, they do get made in Canada. Perhaps these obstacles are ritualized points of entry into the cult of Canadian filmmaking. Perhaps they build stronger, more risk tolerant filmmakers. Perhaps they...well, whatever the reason, low budget films will continue to be made as long as filmmakers find new ways, like television, to finance their films.



Mike Hoolboom is a long-time LIFT member, filmmaker, writer, curator, and fringe film supporter. Bobby Nijjar and Larissa Fan interviewed him for the Newsletter shortly after the premiere of his latest film, *Panic Bodies*, and the release of his new book, *Plague Years: A Life in Underground Movies*.

Mike answered our questions in typically eloquent fashion:

BN: Do you watch traditional narrative film? If so, which filmmakers do you feel have had the most influence on your work?

MH: When I learned to talk I learned through repeating. Breakfast. Father. Humiliation. It's impossible to speak without quoting. Because all the words I use have been used before. And it's the same with the movies. I think that every picture has already been made, and that movies are primarily an art of relationships, of placing one thing next to another. Truffaut said that the first film you make is a blueprint for future work, it's a film you re-make over and over. But really it's the first film you watch that is being re-made, re-seen through all the veils of the movies that come after. Perhaps after all it's not important to see so many movies, maybe we could watch only one, understand the way it changes as we change, until at last we can see it as it really is, as the movie we make each day when we get up in the morning.

LF: I'm wondering about your working method — do you tend to have a really clear idea of what you want when you start filming, or is it more of a gathering and sorting process?

MH: I wish I could say it was planned from the beginning but it's not. I've always wanted to be a filmmaker like Atom Egoyan, who I think is able to see his films before they're made. I imagine him like the host of a great party who begins alone, in a theatre, and invites those close to him to share this view, this fascination, and slowly all the seats fill, as his friends invite others, until there are theatres round the world watching in delight.

But I lack the imagination. I'm always in a state of confusion, and because I'm so poor technically, nothing ever comes out the way I imagine. Instead, something else appears. And this something else is what my films are about. Increasingly, I'm trying to get out of the way of this something else, trying not to let my ego stand in the way of the film that is trying to make itself heard. Which is why I'm always following my films, carried away to places they feel comfortable in. The light they need to be seen in.

PANIC BODIES

AN INTERVIEW WITH MIKE H

BN: Your latest movie *Panic Bodies* (70 min 1998) is a compilation of six short films (*Positiv*, *A Boy's Life*, *Eternity*, *1+1+1*, *Moucle's Island*, and *Passing On*), each featuring a different body or performance. How did the films come together?

MH: When the first couple were done I felt they needed company. It was like joining a rock band — okay you've found a really kick ass drummer and the lead guitarist is doing things to your insides that are probably illegal, but it still needs something, it lacks a groove, so you go out and find a bass player.

Multi-part movies are not new of course — Abigail Child's *Is This What You Were Born For?* is a flick in seven parts, each quite distinct, Razutis' *Amerika* comes to mind, Brakhage's *Songs*, *Arabic Numerals*, *Dog Star Man*... It solves the problem that most short filmers face, which is always showing work in a context created by others, having your stuff aligned with strangers. And it's nice to invite people out for an evening — to serve them a starter, a main course and dessert.

BN: In the first segment of *Panic Bodies*, called *Positiv*, you use four screens to tell the story of a man who has AIDS. One screen shows the narrator, the other three feature a barrage of pictures from a variety of sources (home movies, archival footage, Hollywood flicks). How did the idea of using four screens develop? How did you choose the images?

MH: The film reflects the condition of my body, and the illness which inhabits it, an illness which I've been struggling for the past decade to see as anything but an invader, as something foreign. Most of the life of my body is alien to me. At this moment, there are enzymes secreting the cranberry muffin I've just swallowed. There are small sea horse shaped things isolating cells hosting contagion, and signaling others to arrive, via the bloodstream, in order to attack them. My body, like everyone's, is host to a fantastic variety of microscopic life, and while I try to ignore it as much as

DOLBOOM

the body offers. In order to conjure these worlds I didn't stick sophisticated cameras into the bodies of my subjects in order to record this secret life — I simply lacked the means — so I did the next best thing, I went to the video store. And found a wondrous buffet of bodies young and old, frozen and on fire, cracking apart and transforming. I watched a lot of very bad movies, many of them made recently, which included some lovely sequences begging for new homes. It was time to begin recycling, to bring my blue box to filmmaking.

LF: Can you talk a little bit about the technique you used to achieve this effect?

MH: It was made possible by the good folks at Charles Street Video, who granted me a residency where I was able to work on an AVID. Because I'm too dumb to learn anything so complicated, I worked with a number of editors, Elizabeth Schroeder, Wiebke von Carolsfeld and Dennis Day, who did all the tech stuff. As well as making suggestions, of course. The multi-screen thing is very easy on an AVID, you just press a button and it happens. Or that's how it looked to me. Making video is very anxiety provoking, because up until the moment you're finished you have nothing. It's just a bunch of zeros and ones in the computer. When you're through you ask the computer to send all these numbers to a

possible, it is no less real than what I like to think of as my "real" life. AIDS has returned my body to me, no longer as the single, aging flesh suit I glimpse in the mirror, but as a hotel for dissidents, an electrical system, a complex of waterways. Lacan, amongst others, believed that our sense of identity is rooted in our bodies. We are one person because we have one body. A unified personality. But this of course is an illusion. And so *Panic Bodies*, which is a narrative of the body, is a film of parts, and the section called *Positiv* is similarly divided, in order to offer a glimpse of the many possibilities



Moucle's Island

videodeck. And then you have something you can hold in your hands. I took the tape to Exclusive (kindest and most approachable folks in the lab biz) who transferred it to film.

LF: I'm curious about the techniques used in *1+1+1*. The same footage is repeated three times, each with a different look, moving from images which are heavily manipulated and degraded to the final sequence which becomes more "realistic." How did you achieve the different looks? What was the motivation behind this technique?

MH: Have you ever had someone swear their undying, life longed love for you? Only the way you part your hair is dumb, you don't know how to talk, your friends are stupid, you move with all the grace of a filing cabinet. Everything is a problem and requires changing. That's what *1+1+1* is really about. It was edited in-camera, photographed a frame at a time with a couple of friends: Jason Boughton and Kathryn Ramey. They meet warily, then retire to the kitchen and begin to work themselves over with hand tools, trying to reshape the other into something more pleasing. Exhausted they don each other's clothes — he wears a dress and she puts on a suit — and they fly off together to the strains of Strauss's "Blue Danube Waltz." When they meet they want only themselves, unable to see someone else standing there. It's only when they're able to look at things from the other's place that they can find one another, and happiness.

The film's repetitions derive from this circle of ourselves, the small rounds of personality most of us use to negotiate the world. It begins in hand-processed/coloured negative, and looks pretty murky. There are images of course but it's hard to make out exactly what's going on. The second repetition makes things slightly clearer: now we see the negative sandwiched with its positive. The drama of this couple becoming more evident. And finally, in the third sequence, you

see them in full colour. The veil of the material lifts, miming the movement of their own blindness, their ability to convert everything in the world into metaphors for themselves.

How was the film made? I was visiting friends in Seattle for a week, and we wanted to make a film, using whatever means were at hand. They were babysitting an optical printer, so we took the camera/motor off it and used that to shoot with. They had one roll of colour film in the fridge. It took three days to shoot the roll, one frame at a time. No editing. I took the colour print to B&W Film Factory, asking them to make a b/w print of it (which makes a negative), then gave that to Carl Brown, local maestro



Moucle's Island

the home chemistry set. He processed and added colour, and I used that for print number one. Then I went back to the lab and had them make a positive print of that, and sandwiched it with Carl's original to make print two. Print three was the original.

BN: In the second short sequence from *Panic Bodies* called *A Boy's Life*, a man is searching for his lost penis. The loss of his member seems to be a metaphor for a void in the man's life. In regards to your work in film, have you filled the void? Have you accomplished the things you've wanted or are you still searching for your member?

MH: Why did Freud think that penis envy is exclusive to women? So far as the void goes, painting and writing bring their makers to face emptiness. When they begin work their canvas, their pages, are empty. Movies are just the opposite. As a filmmaker I begin with everything, every image, and from there I make a choice. Filmmaking is like shopping. It's a question of choosing.

BN: Many people interpret your work as autobiography. You seem to distance yourself from labeling your work this way. Do you feel labels are a type of confinement?

MH: I think our own naming is the beginning of a sentence which ends when we die. Naming bestows power — you can't get anyone

to pass you more chocolate cake if you don't know the words. But naming also takes the place of seeing. The table I'm sitting at now — I haven't seen it for years. The chair I'm sitting on, the electric lights — they've all vanished long ago, hidden beneath their names. What begins as a vantage point from which to see the world, an outlook, becomes the world. The look becomes the view.

Nowhere is this more true than in fringe efforts of any sort. It's odd. When Martin Scorsese makes a movie filled with gore and aimless slaughter no one asks: Marty, do you feel like sticking a shotgun up the butt of strangers? When Atom made *Exotica* I never heard reporters ask: Atom, do you spend most of your down time in strip clubs? Would you like to fuck schoolchildren? Because money grants their pictures a different kind of stage. A different view. On the micro-movie level I work at everything's assumed to be autobiography. The lack of money becomes equivalent to a lack of imagination.

On the other hand it's true that there are diary moments in my work. Because I lack the resources of traditional cinema — of skilled technicians and wondrous machines that provide smooth tracking shots, I have to use what I can. In order to plug the holes in the work, I sometimes have to stuff them with the material of my own life.

BN: During the discussion at the end of the premiere for *Panic Bodies*, you said, "The unlucky ones are the ones left behind." What inspired you to make that statement?

MH: Looking at the audience.

BN: You also mentioned that in one sense, HIV/AIDS was a peculiar blessing for you, because it allowed you to see things in a different way. How do you see things differently than you used to?

MH: Like most people, I would rather hold onto the last miserable bit of unhappiness in the world rather than change anything in my life. Becoming positive ended that. I didn't have a choice anymore. Others have taken different roads to the same end. They have kids.

LF: In addition to *Panic Bodies*, you recently released a book *Plague Years*, which is sort of a compilation of scripts from your films. It also features a really amazing filmography. How did the idea for the book develop? What sort of things did you have to think about when adapting the scripts to a purely written form?

MH: The book owes its publication to Steve Reinke, who asked me to write it. Between finishing his next forty videos (they're incredible) and teaching full-time in London he also edited the manuscript, suggesting that it take shape as a pseudo-autobiography. Using some of my film scripts as markers, I began to write around them, constructing the story of a life that mixes fact and fantasy. As I like to do all my serious reading on the toilet, I tried to keep each of the stories short, so it proceeds in episodic fashion from John Wayne playing Hamlet, to Jerry Lewis's unexpected appearance in film school, into AIDS, *Frank's Cock* and beyond.

BN: After going through *Plague Years*, I have to ask you, did you really make out with Madonna? It seemed real when reading it.

MH: I owe her everything. She was my first and best teacher.

LF: How did it feel seeing your picture on the cover of *NOW Magazine*?

(Continued on pg. 22)

UP, UP, AND AWAY! AN IN-FLIGHT GUIDE TO DIVERSI'S JET-FUELED WIDE FOCUS CONFERENCE

by Si Si Penaloza
photos courtesy of Hal Swann

On November 7 and 8 Diversi Film and Video Fund held Wide Focus, a conference for filmmakers of colour. This was the first such conference organized by the Diversi board as part of its re-thinking of Diversi's role in the community. The conference was structured into two streams: "Getting Started," a series of introductory workshops covering such topics as grant writing and budgeting, and "Moving Forward," intermediate panels dealing with distribution and the broadcast market. Si Si Penaloza reports on the conference:

The conference opened with a keynote address from Cameron Bailey. In this address, Bailey traced the history of Diversi and the progress of filmmakers of colour in Canada. He remarked that in the current cultural climate, ethnic "buzzwords" may be of more hindrance than help. He called on Diversi to rethink strategy, taking into consideration the way the funding landscape has changed. I sense the same public exhaustion and weariness of words that Bailey speaks of; people are numb, impervious to words like "racial equity" and "diversity." Proposals that throw around identity politic idioms are a dime a dozen.

"We can do the same work, but can't talk about it the same way. If we are to keep our eyes on the prize, we have to change the way we talk about the work that we do. It's a matter of language." Bailey speaks of getting inside while staying outside. He revived an old maxim, "Last ones in, first ones out" — referring to the status of filmmakers of colour as last in getting access money, and the first out when funding is downsized. That sentiment was echoed by several other panelists in the next two days.

The Diversi Film and Video Fund gave out five awards at the conference in three categories: DiversiStart, DiversiDoc, and DiversiDrama. One panel of the conference was entitled, "DiversiAward Jury Final Deliberations." It was at the reading of this title in the program that I did a double take.

The "fishbowl" jury deliberation was the most unique and daring exercise of the conference. In this giant leap of faith and trust, participants of Wide Focus were privy to a grant contender's dream: to be the proverbial fly on the wall at a jury's discussion of their proposal. Indeed, some applicants to the Diversi Fund were curious (or tenacious) enough to be in the room, while others opted for the oblivion of staying in bed.

The open jury was facilitated by Louise Lore. It was to be a jury of the applicants' peers and was thus made up of three film and video artists: Stephen Foster, Jorge Lozano, and Gitanjali Saxena. They were at liberty to discuss anything pertaining to the merits or demerits of a proposal put on the table. They commented on everything from script weakness and continuity, budget, cultural relevance, and competence of production teams.

The applicants and jurors were commended for their courage in making this process public. Although the panel could have relied on disclaimers that the session was a simulation, the jurors boldly took

on the daunting task of breaking down why one project would get the purse and not another. The jurors spoke candidly about weaknesses in each proposal. For anyone who'd ever written a proposal for funding and been rejected, left wondering why — this panel was sure to strike a chord.

I was encouraged by Diversi's groundbreaking practice of presenting an open jury. Beyond initial experimental curiosity for the organizers, it took courage. It's refreshing to see an organization that is not afraid of exposing itself internally, opening itself up to public scrutiny. It was the ultimate act of responsibility and accountability to the community for funds they would be appropriating in less than six hours. It was a statement. Moreover, showing us what is supposed to transpire behind closed doors gave us the gift of perspective — a unique advantage — making visible a process that will affect all of us in our careers. It is knowledge that demystifies the process.

One management mandate of the fund is to take the initial step of investing in projects that, due to "obscure" subject matter, other mainstream agencies keep at arm's length. The idea being that this initial investment would be a vote of confidence in securing additional funds from other offices. Any show of support on paper can peak another organization's interest, and in this way, Diversi is launching projects that would otherwise have a hard time getting off the ground. Financial backing aside, Diversi aspires to be more than just the little pot of gold at the end of the rainbow; its leaders are far more ambitious. Diversi's sights are set on evolving into an instrumental resource for filmmakers of colour.

The workshop that was of greatest benefit to me was Richard Fung's discussion entitled: "How to Say What You Mean: An Overview of



top: Louise Garfield (L) & Claire Prieto (R)
bottom: Cameron Bailey



top: (l to r) **Monique Manatch, Tina Hahn, Richard Fung** and **Maria Teresa Larrain**
middle: Conference wrap-up, **Jennifer Holness** standing
bottom: **Jorge Manzano**(l) and **Marcos Arriaga**(r)

Proposal Writing." In his presentation, Richard lay bare the bones, exposing the skeleton of what a successful proposal is built on. He was very generous in relating his own experiences and personal concerns; I think a lot of the filmmakers in attendance appreciated that.

Stressing the strength of support materials, budget, and curriculum vitae, Richard demonstrated strategies he has used in the past to court juries. It is important to familiarize the jury with your methodology, explaining how your treatment or approach to the subject is unique. I thought his best bit of advice was, "Write visually... it isn't enough to tell — you have to show, demonstrate." He talks about how using images in grants can ground the ideas. He encourages us to describe our piece: what will we see and what we will hear?

Fung's advice is to not be meek; he incited us to be aggressive, to call the officer of the granting council and ask questions. Further, if the officer is not helpful or is dismissive, Fung says to make a complaint to the organization. He feels it's important to take ownership of public funding agencies. Serving on juries himself, he is interested in the applicant's sense of how this project is going to contribute to the body of Canadian film. He is also concerned as to how this particular work would fit into the artist's trajectory. For Fung, it is important that the artist write about the project's relation to a broader context, be it to the national body of work or to the artist's own professional development. Richard has contextualized his work in such a way that it is plain to see how he views his work in relation to his community.

There was quite a bit of interest in the work-in-progress panel. Director Jorge Manzano, producer Timothy Hill, and actor Gail Maurice were on hand to discuss their film, *Johnnie Greyeyes*. They discussed their approach to filming on a small budget. Their style of filmmaking is guerrilla at best: shooting from the hip, rolling on the run, grabbing

goodwill as it is extended. It has the spirit of a grassroots formula — everyone must work to rule. The rapport between the production team was obvious; these people clearly trusted and stood by one another. With only the solace and shoulders of one another, they take the collective leap of faith that it takes to have a goal as ambitious as theirs.

Jorge is caught in the precarious and frustrating position of having a letter from Sundance expressing interest in the film contingent on its completion. Sundance made their decision on the basis of a rough cut. Jorge takes it all in stride, refusing to compromise his vision — he isn't the type to let a little thing like money dictate the course of his flight. He is a filmmaker of remarkable focus with a passion for telling stories that otherwise remain unspoken. I enjoyed meeting him; his persistence is inspiring. His is an artful dodge of flying over hurdles and jumping through flaming hoops to see a project through.

Louise Garfield presented a session entitled, "How to Finance Your First Feature Film — A Case Study: *The Hanging Garden*." Garfield detailed a financing redux of the film. Her story illuminated how important trust is in a director-producer relationship. The script of *The Hanging Garden* came to her hand delivered by the director Thom Fitzgerald, and in an instant a creative union was struck. Financing took a year from the day they met to the time of production.

Garfield and Fitzgerald, as co-producers, got stuck in a funding standoff between two agencies that threatened to shut down the production a day or two before shooting. Needless to say, a successful producer must be a stellar juggler and savvy diplomat — Louise had to pacify many parties in order to keep the lines of protocol clear. She seemed wary of the dysfunction inherent in co-productions. The trouble amongst financial backers incurred a few days before *The Hanging Garden* was set to shoot remains unresolved to this day.

What impressed me about Wide Focus, in its inception and practice, is that the ideas it engages are beyond the rhetorical. The discussion isn't framed by racial-representation-speak, rather it is focused on our collective access to the means of production. In other words, it's not about the why of marginalized identity, it's about the how of doing it for oneself. It was not an exercise in the manufacturing of identity for mainstream commercial consumption. This was not a conference at which an over-and-against stance was de rigeur; nor was it a conference where all the connections were insular and self-serving. The message was clear: get your work out there. As Cameron Bailey put it: "Get inside while staying outside."

Diversi is an organization intent on reaching out to filmmakers of colour. At the same time, they are not in the business of "hand holding" or "coddling." Over the course of an intensive two days, they aimed to provide us with the tools and resources to "do it yourself." The conference was aimed at inciting discourse and facilitating dialogue. I saw connections being made around me; the energy and activity were buzzing. The participants were eager with their questions, the panelists generous with their answers.

As a closing thought, I can't congratulate Diversi and Tina Hahn, artistic director of Wide Focus and chair of Diversi, enough for fostering such a successful meeting of the minds. I can't thank them enough for putting such heart into creating such a feeling of community solidarity. A conference is only as good as the quality of people who will be conferring. The caliber of industry professionals that Diversi managed to assemble was formidable; it was a powerhouse conference of heavy-weights. Hahn envisions Diversi evolving into a mitochondria of the filmmakers of colour community. To that end, she insisted we set a date for a follow-up meeting to commence on November 17th. For those of us that were there, the onus is on us to keep the ball we all had a hand in inflating, in the air.

DANCING IN FRAMES PER SECOND

By Darya Farha

The Moving Pictures Festival was started in 1992 to highlight dance film and video, a small but growing area of work that has been dubbed "dancefilm." This year Moving Pictures expanded to encompass a cross-Canada tour, and screenings in conjunction with the Fringe Festival of Independent Dance and the Movado Dance series at Harbourfront. Darya Farha reviews the festival, held October 15-18 at the Royal and John Spotton Cinemas.

Sogni di Fantasia by Rob Pilichows

moving picture + s

"Liar! Liar!" the too-large crowd shouted playfully. They were lined up at the Saturday night screening, and a man had just ensured that he would get in by identifying himself as one of the filmmakers. But while the crowds remained jovial, the message was clear: the Moving Pictures Festival had outgrown the John Spotton venue.

Other signs of the festival's increasing prominence were a CBC film about Karen Kain screened Thursday night at Jackman Hall, and a screening of Bravo!FACT dance shorts that almost filled the Royal on Friday. Saturday's "Global Moves" screening presented an international roster that included Mike Figgis' *Flamenco Women*, while the "Canada Dances" program later the same evening included Bruce MacDonald's compassionate and imaginative *Elimination Dance*, featuring man-of-the-hour Don McKellar.

I was attending because my animated film *Full Service Automation* had been chosen for "Canada Dances", and because I attend every year, engaging in a three-day contemplation of the body on film. I have never been able to understand why dance remains a marginal and separate art, ignored, for the most part, by artists in other media. Is it because it is a woman-associated art in a society that prefers men? In any event, I decided to think more carefully this year about what filmmakers generally can learn about their own medium and practices from watching dancefilm.

As I expected, there were few ordinary filmmakers in the crowd: most people there were dancers or makers of dancefilm. And the atmosphere was quite different as well from what I've experienced at other film festivals: more optimistic, cheerful and naïve even, less desultory than is normally the case. For dancers, the festival represents a new frontier, a new way to bring their art to more people, and a new set of experiences and considerations for those involved. The dance audience also seemed to be taking pleasure in the type of spectatorship specific to

film, a spectatorship without the tension of a live performance, when all the work has already been done.

Given the mood, humorous films went over particularly well. A clear favorite was *Hurtle*, by New Zealander Shona McCullagh. The film featured a very funny struggle by two nuns to get to a toilet, and although it couldn't quite sustain its energy and wit to the end, it was remarkable for its visceral, physical, in-your-face choreography. Not surprisingly, it went on to win the Paula Citron Choreography for the Camera Award.

Another crowd favorite was *Belly Boat Hustle* by Sandra Swatzky and Nicole Mion. In this piece, four businessmen leave behind the demands of corporate life to go fishing. Of course, part of what's so delightful about their fishing boat frolicking is the contrast it presents to the body regimentation that is a fact of our society. But I was reminded as well of the comparatively narrow range of motion filmmakers usually allow themselves to represent. In other words, by obeying the movement rules, filmmakers miss an opportunity to challenge the version of reality those rules are meant to uphold. If bodies are the medium through which social order is maintained, we filmmakers should be as concerned with bodies and motion as are the dancefilmmakers.

In fact, these films were able to move me over and over again simply by placing dancers in the same "realistic" settings used in non-dance films, and then breaking the movement rules of those settings. In *When Ravens Fly*, for example, two leather jacket-clad women dance passionately in a park, while in *Pothead* a man wearing everyday overalls dances beneath a gritty Brooklyn Bridge. Other filmmakers, such as John Greyson in *Herr* and Moze Mossanen in *The Golden City* achieve a similar effect by dressing the dancers in suits. To dance where it's not expected — and that's

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Pothead by Evann Siebens
The Changing Room by Alyson Bell

almost everywhere — draws attention very succinctly to the power relations that would be difficult to articulate otherwise, that hold our bodies motionless in their silent spell. Dance in these contexts reminds us of the body as the field of all significance, the place where everything happens, the source of all possibilities and impossibilities.

Nick de Pencier's *Tari Rickshaw*, choreographed and danced by Peter Chin, was especially good at pointing to the ability of movement to break up shared assumptions about what constitutes "reality," and to foreground the body. In this film, Chin stands on Yonge Street seemingly to hail a cab, when suddenly a rickshaw appears, powered by an Asian man in a straw hat. Chin climbs aboard and precedes to tear off his western clothes to reveal an Indonesian style suit, and is soon dancing with the small jerky movements associated with Bali, all the while humming and gurgling ecstatically. It is a moment of non-sense that juxtaposes the familiar with the unfamiliar to challenge our expectations. The film manages to be both pleasurable and sophisticated, and went on to win the \$2500 Cinedance Award for Best Direction of a New Canadian Dance film.

On the whole, though, I was a little disappointed that more of the dancefilms did not address the theoretical challenges that film poses. While live dance performance on a stage perhaps encourages a belief in the singular, whole, knowable body, film tends to show the body in pieces. Its continuity is broken further through editing, and through various effects of multiplication such as double exposure, depriving the body of its centre, so that we no longer know where the "real" body "is". Other effects and tricks, such as slow-motion and accelerated motion, permit the body to alter its perceived relationship to time. Manipulations like hand processing can alter our understanding of the body's surface properties, and optical printing can jumble movement in order to create whole new dances not possible in actual performance. The possibilities are endless, but for the most part, the films in the festival adhered to a very empirically-based, non-abstract conception of the body, and a respect for the beauty and integrity of the dancer's body.

Notable exceptions included Michael Downing's *Soap Opera*, which used a very interesting collage technique to create the dialogue, so that every time a dancer spoke, his or her words referenced a whole cultural history of romance. In Philip Barker's *I Am Always Connected*, a dancer appears to be moving in an elaborate physical set-up, until the camera moves away to reveal how the whole thing was done, and we realize that only the background was moving. In 04X:30, Jill Johnson presents four dance "commercials" that take advantage of the unobtrusiveness of the camera to catch and steal almost imperceptible motion, without saddling it with the "significance" that stage performance bestows. *Café Bohème* is a multi-media Carmen that makes us uncertain as to the "what" and "when" of a relationship.

Certainly there was enough here to keep me stimulated, and it's exciting to watch a developing field. I'll inevitably be back for more next year.

The Independent World: LIFT in Vienna

Ruba Nadda is an amazingly prolific filmmaker whose films have screened at over 20 festivals around the world in the past year. The LIFT Newsletter asked her to write this report about her trip to the Vienna International Film Festival, while she was still 'reeling' from her experience there.

My Trip to Vienna by Ruba Nadda



I was recently invited to attend the Viennale - Vienna International Film Festival, where they screened eight of my short films. It was a truly overwhelming experience and I'm not sure how to start, but I guess I'll start in Rotterdam, where I screened five short films in January.

Initially Rotterdam accepted my three short films, *do nothing*, *interstate love story*, and *wet heat drifts through the afternoon*, and they were interested in viewing the new films I was working on, *Damascus nights*, *so far gone* and *the wind blows towards me particularly*. At the time, I had no idea that I would be able to finish them by Christmas, which was the deadline they had given me, because I had run out of money. Sometime in early December, I was offered a job at Ontario Hydro for a couple of weeks and was able to finish them quickly. Rotterdam accepted two of them right away, and even billed me as their 'discovery' in the program. I attended the festival and I had a great time, but what I didn't know at the time was that a man named Hans Hurch attended my screening. He is the Festival Director of Viennale - Vienna International Film Festival.

A couple of months after Rotterdam, I received a few phone calls from festivals interested in showing my work. The Popcorn Film Festival in Stockholm offered to give me my own programme and show all 6 of my films, and also wanted me to do a 2 hour lecture on guerilla filmmaking. So I was invited to beautiful Stockholm to talk about my films and present them as well. Returning to Toronto, I received a call some time in July from the Viennale. I sent them my films right away, and a few weeks later they sent word that they were interested in screening all of them, and they wondered if I was working on anything new. Well, I was, but the films were in the early stages and I didn't think they would be done in time for the festival. We kept exchanging faxes back and forth, and then word came from the festival director that I was being invited to Vienna and they would pay for my flight and hotel accommodations. I couldn't believe it — I would be back in Europe for the third time that year!

In the mean time, they kept asking me how my films were coming along. I had shot my two new films, *laila* and *slut*, and had believed they would be finished by the end of the year. I plugged away and finished them with fresh 16mm copies by sometime around the end of September. I couldn't afford to do a transfer to VHS for the festival to preview, but they sent word that they would accept them without viewing, and to send stills and so forth for information for the programme book. So now I was attending the Viennale with eight short films and my own programme. I tried not to be too overwhelmed.

When I first arrived, I was very humbled at how kind and generous the festival organizers were. Each night I was there, we were taken to dinner at a different restaurant. There I was introduced to fellow filmmakers, people in the business, and journalists. I was really surprised because my first night at dinner I realized there was a buzz going around about my films. Apparently there had been a press screening and it had gone really well. I was approached by many people who kept telling me that Hans Hurch was a fan of my work, as well as with genuine curiosity about how I could make eight films in one year.

Viennale is a fairly large film festival. They showed approximately 24 shorts and 75 features. Since Hans Hurch came on as festival director, he has been very dedicated to showing and discovering independent and low budget films. Hans Hurch is truly one of the kindest people in film I have ever met. He believes in independent filmmaking 100 percent, and he has made a mission to seek it out wherever it is. Of course Viennale also shows your big budget films, ie: John Carpenter, and other Hollywood names. There was a special and huge program on Godard as well. There were only two entries from Canada, myself and Don Mckeller, who was also attending for his film *Last Night*. The next day I was booked to do some interviews in the morning for indieWIRE and Filmmaker Magazine. I was asked (throughout the festival as well) how I had

made so many films in such a short time span. Before I had arrived in Vienna, everyone thought I was some 60 year old Hungarian man who'd been making films for years. Everybody was quite surprised to see me. The only answer I could give them was that I had given up a lot (apartment, phone, etc) and had tried to master how to do as much as I could on my own.

Over the course of the festival I had a fantastic time. The organizers were unbelievably hospitable and catered to everyone's needs. I met many programmers, including those from Berlin and Cannes. It was quite a change from the reception that I'm used to in Canada, where I have a hard time getting my films shown, and a harder time getting grants.

The night before my screening, I was told that it was sold out. I was really shocked when I arrived at the theater — it was packed with people. I was accosted by eager and very friendly people for my autograph (I had to ask if they had the right person!) And then Hans Hurch made a special, and apparently rare, appearance as he introduced my

films. In my film *Damascus nights*, I actually make a mention of Vienna (my father lived there for 6 months) and that went over very well in the crowd. My films were received extremely well overall. I thought I was dreaming — it felt so unreal. Afterwards, in the lobby, many people came to me and I was speechless at times. There were Arabs there supporting me in what I was doing (my background is Arabic and many of my films have Arabic themes). Even a few Canadians living in Vienna showed up to see what I was up to.

What's great about Viennale, and Europe for that matter, is that they have a very high regard for art. They treat artists with respect. They're raised at a very young age with a cinema that is not bombarded by Hollywood. They're used to seeing short films. When you tell the average Canadian you make short films, they look bewildered, like they've never heard of them. Even when I was trying to distribute my short films, people kept asking "why?" Why was I making short films when they really never go anywhere?

I had a great time, although many of the people attending had met each other at other festivals, and I sometimes felt a little out of place. I was always being asked what films I had seen and the

answer was always the same: Nothing. (I actually saw two films.) I really wanted to see Vienna. It's a gorgeous city (you must ignore the cuisine) and the beautiful buildings go on forever. I saw many museums and art galleries and walked and walked and walked. At the end of the Festival they not only offered to invite me back next year, but also invited my sister Fadia, who appears as the lead actress in most of my films.

Of course the trip back was hell. I missed my connecting flight and instead of coming into Toronto at three in the after-

noon, I got in at 2 am. And I had to be at work for 7:30 in the morning, all jet lagged (I couldn't afford to take another day off, everyone thought I was crazy). Right now, I'm busy finishing writing a feature film that I plan to shoot very soon, and I have a couple of short films in mind too.

I just would like to say that I've experienced tons of rejection. And the one thing I knew in my heart was that I was making these films out of pure passion and I couldn't give up. My first film, *Lost Woman Story*, is a 30 minute film that was made with everything I had,

and it has gone absolutely nowhere. I spent so much money on finishing it, spent even more money on sending it to film festivals in Europe and the States and Canada. Nothing. And I thought it was going to kill me. But then I decided to make another film, a five minute film that would be made fast and would be very short and that was called *Do nothing*. It's gone on to show in over 20 film festivals — I am so proud of it.

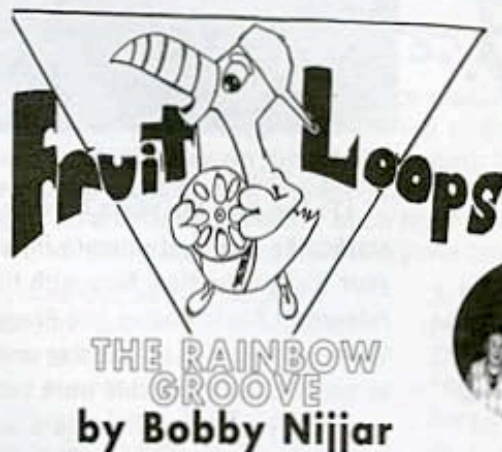
From my so called "failure" first film, I learned so much: I learned not to send to the States and waste money on entry fees, I learned not to cry when rejected by the Toronto International Film Festival, and my crew and I learned how to do things quicker and better. I still get tons of rejections, but the trick is to keep sending. I've been told over and over again that it all depends on who sees your work. My latest films have still not been shown in Toronto, but that's okay, rejection is good for the soul. For me, it makes me work harder. I've stuck to my original goal which is to tell stories. Film festivals are and will always remain secondary to me. So never, ever give up!



Damascus nights



In June, I became a member of the advisory committee for Fruit Loops: The Rainbow Groove, a show celebrating the art produced by queer youth. Queer as in: gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transvestites and transgendered people. Youth as in people 25 years of age and younger. The first Fruit Loops took place at Tallulah's Cabaret inside the Buddies in Bad Times Theatre on August 31st, 1998. This is my recollection of that night:



As the crowd started to gather they were treated to two audio pieces by Brent Heatherington, a 3rd year Radio and Television Arts student at Ryerson Polytechnic University. The first piece was about a Drag Queen preparing for a night out, and the other was a 60 second public service announcement against gay stereotypes. This was all heard in the dark, giving a hypnotic feel to the night.

As the lights came on Janis Purdy and Andrea Ridgely, two members of Fruit Loops advisory committee, addressed the crowd. Janis is the coordinator of the Supporting Our Youth (SOY) project. It is through SOY's arts and culture committee that Fruit Loops came to be. Janis and Andrea introduced the emcees for the night: Irshad Manji, the executive producer and host of The Q Files on CP24, and Damien Mellin, a young artist and another advisory committee member of Fruit Loops. The hosts gave a little monologue and Irshad pitched her new show - can't blame her, I'd do the same. Both hosts encouraged the predominantly young crowd to view the visual art during the intermission. Photography and visual art were provided by Jeanette Martin, Stephen Lan, Chantal Rousseau and Suzy Malik.

The first live act of the night was Debra Anderson, a poet and filmmaker. She read four poems/monologues. One was called "Staring Problems," which dealt with the anxiety of young gay love. Following Debra was Scott Treleavan, a filmmaker/writer, who read his piece "An Open Letter from the New Queer Radicals." With their charismatic delivery, both Scott and Debra had the audience rolling around with laughter.

Next on the agenda was the feature film of the night. A standard feature film runs at 90+ minutes, queer youth feature films run about 20+ minutes. Hey, we're poor! The feature film of the night was *Telefunk 8* by Nicole Chung, a recent graduate of Ryerson's film program. Nicole's film humorously focuses on the trials and tribulations of Chloe, a young girl coming to grips with her homosexuality and the fact that she may be in love with one of her friends. *Telefunk 8* definitely brought down the house. It received a great deal of positive feedback, much to Nicole's delight.

After the intermission the audience was given the treat of getting to watch the hilarious animation shorts from the Inside/Out Festival, produced by LIFT's own Allyson Mitchell. The filmmakers included Chris Chong, Sokes Yoon, Brian Pallic, Debra Anderson and Will Munroe (Ed. note: see Christopher Chong's

article in Vol.18, No.3 of the Newsletter for more info on these shorts). Other short films came from Anne-Marie Estrada, Sarah Abbott, Brent Heatherington and Shauna Richler-Lancit.

Following the films, Alisa Mitchell and her dance troupe enchanted the audience by performing to the music of Meredith Munk-7. After Alisa was Tara Humphreys, the first musical act of the night. Tara is a street musician as well as a student at York University. She changed the tone of the night with her beautiful and melancholy voice. The last act of the evening was the band Humberfish, composed of three really cute young ladies. The lead singer, though she had to clear her throat several times, has a wicked voice that got the crowd going. Humberfish performed several songs that ranged from being campy to just pure, plain old folk.

Janis and Andrea came back onstage to address the crowd and thanked everyone for their participation. The night was a huge success. What pleased me the most, aside from the great performances, was the supportive audience. The crowd was not a bunch of bitter or cynical little shits, but a vibrant and energetic group who were pleased to see their friends and family exhibit/perform their art. At least 250 people were there and Tallulah's was packed to the max. Not all were youth — parents and adults in the gay community came to show their support, which was more than welcome and greatly appreciated. From the response people have given us, it was quite obvious that Toronto needed Fruit Loops. Queer youth have hungered for the opportunity to exhibit their work in a supportive and caring environment, and thanks to the energy of the people behind Fruit Loops, they now have it.

Mail, drop off, fax or e-mail submissions to Fruit Loops at:

Toronto Coalition for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth (Fruit Loops)

c/o Central Toronto Youth Services

65 Wellesley Street East, #300

Toronto, ON M4Y 1G7

Hours: 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday

Fax: (416) 924-2930

E-mail: tcgby@interlog.com

If you have any questions about Fruit Loops, please contact Janis at 924-2100, ext. 401, or send an e-mail, fax or letter.

PANIC BODIES:

AN INTERVIEW WITH MIKE HOOLBOOM CONT...

MH: Mostly it felt like there were a thousand strangers perched on my balcony wondering why the channel they were watching was so dull. But when I could see past the anxiety, I began to long for the life of the person in the photograph. I began to envy him. Why? Because his story had been told. Because he no longer had to worry about what he looked like in the morning — which is the time of day when the body's infirmities are most pronounced, when young children are already teenagers, and the middle-aged are residents of old age homes — because he would always look the same way. He had decided how to appear, and beneath his look was a story which could be told and repeated. Looking at this photograph, my photograph, I saw someone who had embraced the limits of himself, who would no longer be embarrassed or ashamed or arrive at a party without a word on his lips. There was closure here, a sense of limits, and a rare certainty. Andy Warhol longed to be a machine. I'd like to

become a picture.

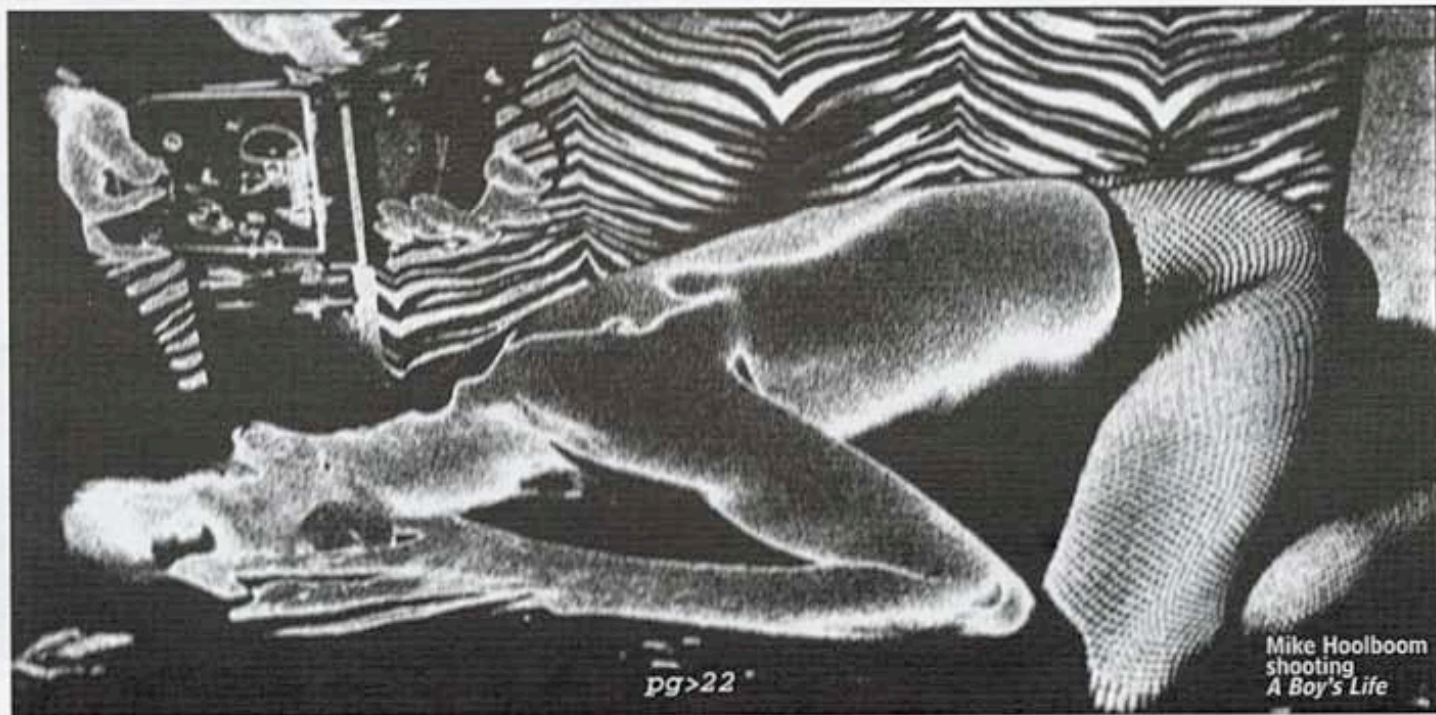
LF: The past ten years have been marked by a kind of urgency in terms of your film production. Now with the release of *Panic Bodies* and *Plague Years* you seem to be pausing and trying to make sense of all this work you've done. Do you find yourself in a more contemplative mood? Where do you see your work taking you in the future?

MH: The screening and its accompanying media puff were mostly anxiety, I shit three times a day and woke in the wee hours of the morning where it was always question period, a group of the learned and informed asking about parts of my film I'd never seen before, terrible and horrific scenes they described, and I listened with a mix of fascination and unknowing, wondering how they'd seen these things, but thinking there might be a clue to what I should be making next, that this might be some troubled way to arrive at a new script. Anyways, the screening came and went and everything is sort of back to normal, except most nights I am still waking at four, only question period left long behind — now I'm a Mexican housewife stuck in a new high rise development in Monterey and a number of

things are clear to me: we can't afford to live where we're living, my husband pretends to go to work each day except he's not really a plumber he's a dinosaur expert, and he goes to the secret place they've been hiding out all these years. Most died, not because of temperature changes, but because of a joke they heard. They died laughing. And only my husband knows what the joke is. The joke is television. I pretend to clean house all day but instead I have to work because he makes no money with the animals.

So that's what's happening now, soap opera dreams at night and during the day cutting film about my new teacher, a new mentor I've taken on who is able to convert simple actions like walking through a door, or running across a field, or throwing a ball, and find happiness in them. The truth is he finds joy everywhere he looks, he busily invents the world every time he enters it, while I turn the world around me into a dull sauce, deadened by habit and routine. He is my five year old nephew Jack. Jack Daniels Fuller.

Plague Years, edited by Steve Reinke and published by YYZ Press, is available at YYZ, Pages, and Book City.



pg>22

Mike Hoolboom
shooting
A Boy's Life

Leftover Auction items:

The following items are still available from the Silent Auction:

FEARLESS FILMS AND VIDEO

Value: \$200.00

Minimum bid: \$66.00

\$200 worth of on-line services. Does not include tape stock or dubbing.

SOFTLIGHT INC.

Value: \$500.00

Minimum bid: \$166.00

One CD-ROM electronic press kit (epk).

SOHO POST & GRAPHICS

Value: \$1,500.00

Minimum bid: \$500.00

2 hours of Henry V-8 editing time. Afternoon and night shifts only. Some other conditions apply.

SOHO DIGITAL FILM

Value: \$2,500.00

Minimum bid: \$833.00

1-minute segment of video "rezzed up" to 35mm film. Includes the cost of film stock, processing and negative.

Some members have not yet paid for their auction items. Please remember to pay at the LIFT office!!!

Media 100 Users: Please Read

Currently LIFT does not charge for disk storage space on the RAID's, while other co-op's charge \$1/hr per GB and they will not allow you to leave your Media files on the RAID for more than one week. So, if your project uses 4 GB of disk storage space, at other places you would be charged an additional \$4/hr for each hour that you edit. We don't want to do that, so we must ensure that everyone follows these rules:

1. Make sure that all your source tapes are time coded with either LTC or VITC or both. If you have source tapes that are not time coded, we can stripe LTC onto Audio Track 2 in the ProTools Suite, as long as you do not need the audio that is currently on Track 2.
2. Media can be left on the RAID's for a maximum of one week. If you do not have a booking for more than 7 days and the disk space is required, the Technical Co-ordinators may have to remove your media. If your source material is time coded, you can simply replace the media by batch re-digitizing. If you plan to leave the system for more than one week, please let the Technical Co-ordinators know in advance.

3. Back up your folder in the M100 Projects Folder onto a floppy disk or a ZIP disk. (Make sure that the Media 100 is not open when you insert a floppy disk into the drive.) These files do not contain the media but simply tell the computer where the media files are stored on the RAID's and are similar in size to word processing files.
4. Media can be backed up on JAZ disks, but keep in mind that you will need one JAZ disk for each GB of media that you have stored. Also, the Jaz disk drive must be moved from the ProTools Suite by one of the Technical Co-ordinators during office hours.

ads:

NEWSLETTER NOTICE BOARD:

Next issue we publish the **annual storyboard**. If LIFT doesn't have updated info on films you have completed in the last year, please deliver, fax or e-mail it in by **January 23** (or wallow forever in obscurity!)

Until the LIFT darkroom is up and running, the Newsletter is looking for people who have darkroom access who would be able to process photos in exchange for volunteer hours. Please get in touch with Larissa through LIFT, or e-mail fanburke@interlog.com.

The Newsletter accepts story ideas on an ongoing basis. Need volunteer hours? Want to write? Phone/fax LIFT or e-mail Larissa at: fanburke@interlog.com

UPCOMING DEADLINES:
Jan.15 and March 15



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Image from Mike
Hoolboom's *Panic Bodies*
in her eye stills from the
Moving Pictures Festival,
Panic Bodies and *Rubba*
Nadda's Damascus nights