

FILM REVIEWS

been; and how the conflict resulting from the 'enemy' (German) girl in her house and in her town is tearing her apart.

Another moment: Timothy Webber and Wendy Crewson, as the couple for

War Brides

d. Martin Lavut p. Bill Gough assoc. p. Janet Kranz sc. Grahame Woods story ed. Alice Sinclair a.d. Rob Malenfant (1st), John Rainey (2nd), Richard Beecroft (3rd) unit man. Alan McPherson cont. Carol Fisher p. sec. Vicki Ohashi d.o.p. Vic Sarin, Michael Storey, Dave Towers mus. Tommy Ambrose, Rick Wilkins (musical arranger) sd. Gerry King light. Archie Kay, R. Huckfield, J. Wilson, Len Watier boom Ian Challis designer Barbara McLean, Marian Wihak (asst.) set dec. Al Laurie, Bruce Ruppell, Doug Tiller cost. Suzanne Mess, Ted Burbine, J. Alles make-up Daisy Bijac, Sandra Sokol, M. Koekke hair Anita Miles design co-ord. Torben Madsen staging W. Holcombe, B. Stunden, R. Stos sp. ex. Sandy Smith cast. Gail Carr, Annika McLachlan post-p. Toni Mori ed. Myrtle Virgo l.p. Elizabeth Richardson, Geoff Bowes, Sonja Smits, Layne Coleman, Sharry Flett, Kenneth Pogue, Wendy Crewson, Timothy Webber, Mary Savidge, Joseph Shaw, Alberta Watson, Sean Sullivan, Doris Petrie p.c. CBC running time 120 min. colour 16mm.



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whom everything goes well, sit on a park bench talking about having another child. The husband says quietly that if he had a son, he wouldn't want him to go to war. Up to this point he has not mentioned anything about his experiences in the war, or anything else of importance. His wife smiles at him uncertainly, not knowing quite how to take it. The scene isn't milked, but we get a lot in a few seconds.

Alberta Watson has the small role of Geoffrey Bowes's old girlfriend, who tried to commit suicide when she heard he had

married and who starts an affair with him after his return. She has little to say or do but she is a compelling presence, a fascinating blend of the neurotic and the firm.

War Brides must be judged a success — the result of the firm grasp that is demonstrated by all concerned in the conception and execution of the film. It succeeds as a made-for-television film by any standards — and in many cases transcends those standards.

Alan Stewart

Louise Carré's Ça peut pas être l'hiver, on n'a même pas eu d'été

Given our culture's current preoccupation with the problems of women, it comes as no surprise to find that someone has finally made a film about the adjustment of a mature woman to widowhood. The subject is a potentially challenging one: as a theme, widowhood in late middle-age has none of the notoriety or easy appeal of, say, divorce earlier on. This ought to make it more difficult to incorporate the many new clichés which now plague "trendy" films about the changing role of women.

Nonetheless, **Ça peut pas...** is curiously reminiscent of precisely such a film — Paul Mazursky's **An Unmarried Woman**. Admirers of this film will concede that its success was due much more to the performance of Jill Clayburgh and to the timeliness of the subject matter than to the script, which was, all things considered, rather flimsy. **Ça peut pas...** has neither Clayburgh (though Charlotte Boisjoli certainly puts in an adequate performance) nor a "hot topic", — nor,

for that matter, glamorous Hollywood sets. So, the script has to stand on its own. And it does, but just barely.

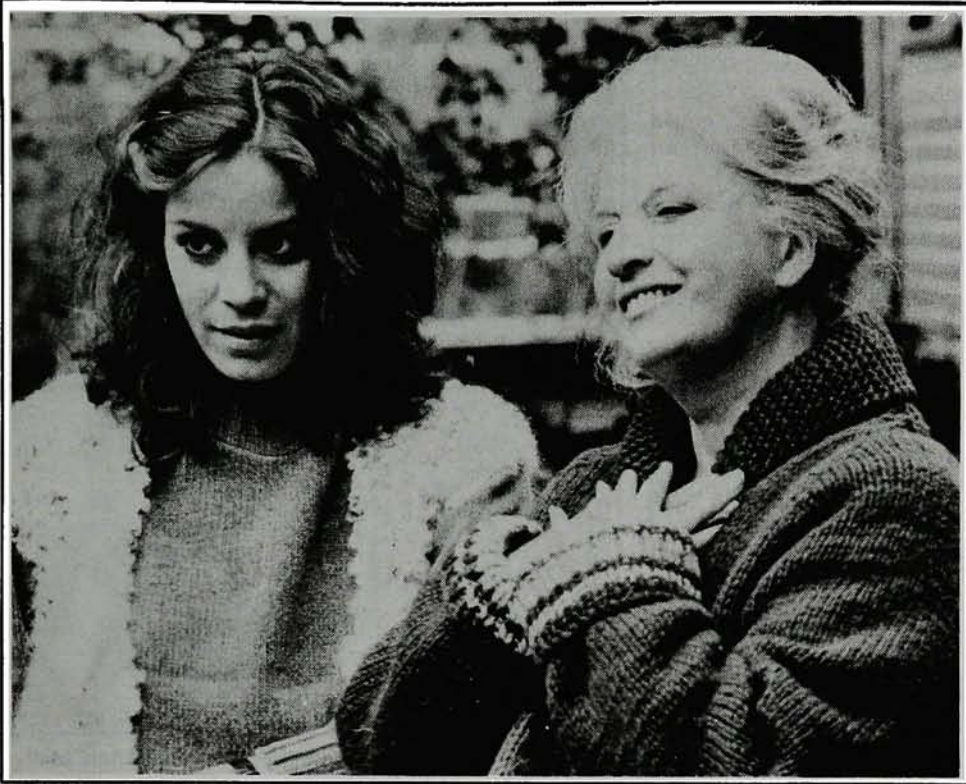
Filmed mostly in the area around Sorel, it tells the story of Adèle Marquis, a comfortably-off 57-year-old woman who loses her husband after almost forty years of marriage, during which she raised eight children. Her immediate reaction is naturally one of depression, but after a winter of mourning she decides she's had enough. A few surprise moves — like taking in a boarder to avoid selling her heavily-mortgaged home; and a few lucky breaks — the boarder turns out to be a suitably personable widower in need of companionship; and Adèle gradually regains full control of her life. She changes her hairdo, learns to drive, goes places she has never been before, all the while gradually developing a discreet friendship with Germain, the new man. But when he proposes marriage she prefers — surprise! — to opt out — rejoicing, though not without some trepidation, in

Ça peut pas être l'hiver...

p. Louise Carré d./sc. Louise Carré mus. Marc O'Farrell d.o.p. Robert Vanherweghem, Daniel Fitzgerald (asst.) light. James Gray, Denis Ménard grip Claude Bresseur cont. Claudette Messier ward. Martine Fontaine stills Takashi Seida unit pub. Danielle Sauvage sd. ex. Michel Charron, Ken Page, Roger Lamoureux sd. mix. (mus.) Louis Hone sd. mix. Jean-Pierre Joutel titles Jean-Marc Brosseau NFB liaison Gaétan Martel ed. André Théberge sd. ed. Anne Whiteside song interp. Louise Lemire, Pière Sénécal lyrics Louise Carré mus. Marc O'Farrell piano/voice Mario Parent 1st unit/a.d. Marianne Feaver p. man. Daniel Louis sd. Alain Corneau, Marcel Fraser (asst.) loc. man. Claire Stevens make-up Brigitte Mc-

Caughy props Charles Bernier, Marie Dupont (asst.) sec. Carole Villandré p.a. Louis Douville, Yolande Paré 2nd unit/a.d. Pierre Gendron p. man. Marie-Andrée Brouillard sec. Suzanne Comtois sd. Jacques Blain, Marcel Fraser, Yvon Benoit (asst.), Esther Auger (asst.) make-up Micheline Foisy props Pierre Fournier p.a. Louis Gascon l.p. Charlotte Boisjoli, Jacques Galipeau, Céline Lomez, Mireille Thibault, Serge Bélair, Daniel Matte, Marie-Ève Doré, Martin Neufeld, Peter Neufeld, Anne-Marie Ducharme, Gaétane Laniel, Illia Esopos, Guillaume Tremblay, Isabelle Doré, Lucie Mitchell, Guy Bélanger, Hélène Grégoire, Louise Arbi- que, Pepper, Jean Richard, Annick Chartier, Réal Côté, Félix Chartier, Wilner Boulain, Jean Belzil-Gascon, Claude Saint-Germain, Martin Lyons, Kathleen Butler, Marjorie Godin p.c. La maison des quatre running time 87 min. col. 16mm dist. J.A. Lapointe Films Inc. (Quebec).

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Heart-to-heart discussions between daughter (Céline Lomez) and mother-in-law (Charlotte Boisjoli) in *Ça peut pas être l'hiver*.

her new-found freedom. The film ends with Germain, and her family, seeing her off on a long-desired trip to Japan. As the car she is in pulls out of her driveway, the camera zooms in on the "For Sale" sign which now graces her lawn. The home which she had so tenaciously held on to, and into which she had even taken a "surrogate husband" to try and maintain a reasonable facsimile of the previous order, is now paying for a jaunt to the Orient.

This note of consolidated independence brings to mind a little too readily the ending of *An Unmarried Woman*, in which Clayburgh says "no" to a gorgeous

hunk of an artist (Alan Bates) in order to pursue her independent life — the new "happy ending" now that marriage is out. But even were this not the case, *Ça ne peut...* would still have difficulty qualifying as much more than a satisfactory made-for-TV drama.

This is due largely to the film's somewhat perfunctory script which, although it occasionally hints at aspects of Adèle's inner life, seems mostly intent on merely documenting the requisite exterior phases of her evolution. We see Adèle going through all the prescribed motions, even having all the prescribed problems, but little else.

The realization that her marriage was really far from satisfactory, her desire for independence from her children, her daughter's discomfort at Adèle's new life could, if developed, have lent the film some much-needed depth (not really provided by the black-and-white flashbacks to her married life). Instead, the realization about her marriage comes about so mechanically that it almost seems a device designed to bring her out of her depression: one day Adèle stops in at a local café and encounters another widow who tells her how much she misses her own husband because he had been, above all, a friend to her. The conversation enlightens Adèle and almost instantaneously brings to a close her period of mourning. On to the next phase...

The film's only real moments of depth are provided by Adèle's reactions to her daughter's feeling of rejection. She realizes, among other things, that as a young woman she had always rejoiced much more at the birth of a son than of a daughter. Over dinner, Adèle confesses to Germain that the prospect of having a son had always been more exciting because — although she could not have formulated it at the time — men live *real* lives, while women are forced to live "in their heads".

I suspect that the lack of more moments which might have lent some degree of individuality and depth to Adèle's drama may be due to Louise Carré's desire to make her heroine a sort of "everywoman", a perfectly ordinary woman who lives a painful but otherwise ordinary experience. However, as a result, her story takes on the characteristics of a case history. Adèle's experience, rather than universal, all too often appears prototypical.

Lucienne Kroha

In the West, it's always...

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