

Canadian Film Awards.

by Jerry McNabb

It's Canadian Film Awards time again.

We received a letter dated August 9th informing us of the August 10th deadline with an apology and a few days extension.

We could get paranoid and think this was in retaliation for Kirwan Cox's article on the awards last year. But more than likely, they are probably just as disorganized as we are and have trouble meeting their own deadlines.

There are changes this year. There is now a Montreal office "so the Canadian Film Awards are no longer English dominated." We'll wait and see on that one; a Montreal office does not guarantee participation by Quebecers who don't feel they are a part of the awards.

They promise "significant television coverage" and "a more exciting party for our industry". They state "we've decided it's about time the Canadian Film Awards became really good entertainment - a fast moving show." It is always harder to hit a fast moving target.

The most intriguing part of the show is the Grierson Award "to the person who has made an outstanding contribution to the Canadian film industry in the past year, if the jury feels such an honor is

the Toronto film maker's co-op

warranted." The cliffhanger will be whether they decide to make an award.

One of my nominations would be Secretary of State Gerard Pelletier if he promised to follow through with a film policy that would guarantee our films being shown in this country.

Janet Good, at Canadian Motion Picture Equipment Rentals, deserves some kind of an award for all the young filmmakers she has taken under her wing. Maybe she would settle with payment of all those outstanding debts.

No doubt some deserving person will receive the award, after a long and thorough search. It would be sad to be told that not one single person in this whole country made an outstanding contribution to the film industry.

But anyway, Canadian Film Awards, we will be watching your fast moving show with interest if not excitement. We want to believe that things are changing but saying so in a press release is not enough. But it's a start. ●

Toronto Filmmakers Co-op

The above item is re-printed from RUSHES, the newly revived Co-op Newsletter. It was written by Jerry McNabb, who is chief resident mogul and co-



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ordinator of all co-op activities, useful and otherwise. RUSHES is being edited by Brenda Roman, a very knowledgeable person in the world of film history and criticism. One great feature is the Toronto Filmcalendar compiled by Howard Lam, which lists all the alternate showings and festivals of films in the area. This is a valuable service not only for the film buff but also for the small exhibitors, who usually don't have even a miniscule fraction of Famous Players' advertising budget. All you have to do to get RUSHES (legally) is to become a member of the Co-op.

A great place to sign up for membership (dues = \$10 per annum) was the Annual General Membership Meeting held at the Poor Alex Theatre on Monday night, September 10th. The meeting got off to a high start with Jerry's Co-ordinator's Report. Frank Nissen, animator at Cinera Productions, chaired the evening in his usual calm and collected manner. Members of the outgoing Executive Board had their say next, and they touched on what the co-op did since its inception in March, 1971, and what they believed the co-op should be doing during the coming year.

The predominant question — discussed in all its ramifications — was whether the co-op should get involved more with actually producing films, or continue as a service organization, aiding and counselling its members who wish to produce films on their own. The consensus opinion of the general membership was that the Filmmakers Co-op should in fact make films and not just talk about them. There were wide differences in opinion about methodology (how to get the money, how to make decisions about who will get to work on the films, how to make value judgments concerning the merits of one script proposal over another, etc.) and the debate still continues within the membership.

The annual elections were held and a new Executive Committee was elected for the coming year. The ten people chosen to represent the co-op membership of one-hundred and twenty young Toronto area filmmakers are:

Raphael Bendahan

(former editor of a photography magazine, awarded a \$3,000 Ontario Arts Council grant for filmmaking.)

Sandra Gathercole

(worked in production on *Goin' Down the Road*, and *Spring Coolie*, founding member of the Co-op, author of the Proposed Film Policy Brief to the Secretary of State, presently publicity manager for the Naked Came the Maple Leaf festival.)

George Csaba Koller

(presently editor/publisher of CINEMA CANADA, cinematographer on the Co-op film this summer, director/cinematographer of documentaries in Toronto, Montreal, New York.)

James Murphy

(Manager of the Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre, founding member of the production co-op.)

Frank Nissen

(professional animator at Cinera Productions, worked on many commercials and an animated featurette, (*Super Joe*) taught co-op animation workshop last year.)

David Peebles

(graduate of the University of Toronto, co-ordinator of the Co-op OFY program during the summer, taught some basic workshops.)

Brenda Roman

(active in film criticism, editor of RUSHES, worked for the Distribution Co-op under a LIP grant last winter helping to exhibit Canadian films throughout Ontario.)

Recha Spree

(a former actress, started to make films on her own, got training in Germany, also works with her husband, who teaches film at the Ontario College of Art.)

Sylvia Spring

(director of the feature film *Madeline Is...* founding member of the Vancouver Filmmakers Co-op, presently living in Toronto and working for the CBC.)

David Tompkins

(director of the Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre, has worked for the Co-op since last winter, and probably knows more about the Canadian film scene coast to coast than anyone else: he travelled cross country in his van, for three months, showing Canadian films and meeting interested people.)

Sylvia Spring's election to the Executive Board and her gracious acceptance assures representation in Co-op decision making of the point of view of those who are in the category of having made a feature length film. Clarke Mackey, Peter Rowe, Don Owen, Morley Markson are all members of the co-op, but Sylvia is the first filmmaker on their level of accomplishment, who will take a more active part in co-op business.

The Poor Alex festival of Canadian films was extended to run until October 8th, closing with *NEON PALACE* by Peter Rowe. The films that were added to the original schedule include *PIERRE VALLIERES* by Joyce Wieland, *COUNTDOWN CANADA* by Bob Fothergill, *ZERO THE FOOL* by Morley Markson, and *COWBOY, MASKS*, and *RULES OF*



BOWLS, which are three excellent, shorter length films from Vancouver. It's a real shame that the festival has to close at all, and it's another illustration of how hard up the arts are for resource space: theoretically, the Canadian films could continue at the Poor Alex under a LIP grant extension, but it's impossible, because a theatre group leased the premises for the entire winter. When film groups are forced to compete with theatre groups for the same space, then something is drastically wrong in that society's attitude toward its artists.

By the way, if you missed the Annual General Meeting and would like to join the Toronto Filmmakers Co-op, you may come by any time to Room 201, 341 Bloor Street West (near Spadina), or call (416) 921-2259. Ask for Jerry or Tom or Sandra or Dave or Jim, we're all very nice people and are waiting to hear from you.

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