

New priorities at CFDC to help

TORONTO — According to new Canadian Film Development Corporation chairman David Silcox, there will be a change in the CFDC's national priorities in order to give the Canadian film industry the boost it needs.

In a speech on the changing role of the CFDC delivered to a group of film professionals at the Trade Forum of the Festival of Festivals, Silcox saw the CFDC's function as facilitating the inevitable growth of the Canadian film production industry. He emphasized the strong interim financing support available to the private sector for films budgeted under \$4 million.

Silcox noted that the CFDC, in its intervention to the CRTC on the pay-TV licensing applications, strongly recommended that the new pay industry support the private sector and Canadian independent production, but refused to comment specifically on the then-unpublished document. Silcox also stated the need to restore investor confidence and saw his organization's role as encouraging and facilitating the number of financing mechanisms available to Canadian producers.

Another CFDC priority is to encourage more government spending at the provincial and federal levels. Silcox hoped the CFDC could persuade the provincial governments to change their policies and attitudes toward the feature film industry. Noting provincial jurisdiction over distribution and exhibition, he commented: "They have not used that responsibility as strongly as they might have to

the benefit of the Canadian production industry."

On the capital cost allowance, Silcox said that it "probably should have been 120%."

Silcox's speech formed part of a panel presentation which included CFDC executive director André Lamy and staff members Jocelyn Pelchat-Johnson, Judith McCann, and Ian McDougall. In the question-and-answer period that followed, the CFDC came under strong criticism from former Director's Guild president Robert Barclay on its policy of not investing in features with budgets exceeding \$4 million.

Ian McDougall defended the CFDC's policy as one of "self-preservation", noting that the rate of return on investment dropped substantially with films budgeted above \$3 million and that most films budgeted above \$5 million in 1980 sold only 50-60% of their units. McDougall stated that the CFDC would invest in a film budgeted above \$4 million only if the producer could demonstrate that the project merited its high cost, citing as an example David Cronenberg's *Videodrome*.

Ticket to Heaven director Ralph Thomas asked the panel what the CFDC's plans were to develop Canadian script-writing. Likening a script to "a blueprint of a movie," Thomas commented that "if the Canadian films being made this year were buildings, they'd all be on the ground in two or three days."

André Lamy answered that the CFDC spent \$1.3 million developing 50 scripts in the past

year, which he claimed was a figure out of proportion with the entire budget.

Not satisfied, Thomas proposed a year of retrenchment within the industry, urging the CFDC to double or triple the amount spent in 1979 and 1980 on script development.

"If we have pay TV, we will be making terrible films on that system, because we do not have the basic component, the script," said Thomas.

In reply, Lamy said that if the CFDC were given more money in 1982, its two top priorities would be distribution and script development.

On the subject of financial assistance for short films, Ian McDougall reiterated that no money was available since this area was outside of the CFDC's mandate and pertained exclusively to the Canada Council. On the possibility of placing a quota on the distribution and exhibition of short films, Judith McCann commented that this would be "a negative way of going about it," and pointed out that this was an area of provincial jurisdiction.

Marit Jensen, a Winnipeg independent filmmaker, asked the panel to address the problem of young filmmakers trying to make their first feature, who don't have the experience to present a \$1-2 million proposal to the CFDC but can only get a maximum of \$40,000 government assistance from the Canada Council.

Lamy sympathized with the problem but could only suggest such groups apply for provincial government and regionally available assistance.

IN TRANSIT

Martin Bockner, former president of Saguenay Films, has been named executive director of the Association of Canadian Movie Production Companies. He brings to the new association the experience of over 30 years in the film industry in Canada, and is its first director.

Astral Films has announced the appointment of **Perry Persaud**, formerly of Saguenay Films, as 35mm theatrical booker. Persaud replaces **Pat Salisbury** who has gone on to Paramount Films.

William T. Armstrong, past vice-president of finance and controller of Norfolk Communications Ltd., has become the general manager of the New Massey Hall. Mark Moore, the hall's first development and finance officer, made the announcement.

In Montreal, **Lucienne Appel** is no longer with David Novek and Associates. She had been, along with Linda Shapiro, a vice-president of the company.

In California, 20th Century Fox has announced the appointment of **Irving N. Ivers** as executive vice-president in charge of world-wide advertising, publicity and promotion. At Manson International, **Peter Elson** becomes vice-president of Acquisitions and Marketing, after having served there as Director

of New Projects and Sales Manager.

In Toronto, film lawyer **Chalmers Adams** and his wife **Gail** announce the birth of their third son, **Talmage**, Sept. 18.

OBITUARY: Chief **Dan George** Canadian actor best known for his role as Old Lodge Skins in the 1970 film *Little Big Man*, in North Vancouver at age 82. Born on the Burrard reserve in North Vancouver, where he served as chief for 12 years, George was a dedicated spokesman for Indian rights and environmental causes.

Tom Johnston, on the staff of the National Film Board from 1953 to 1980, has died in Ottawa at the age of 66. He had served as the board's representative in New York and San Francisco, and acted as the NFB liaison with External Affairs. Of late, Johnston had been a Film Consultant to the Ottawa Branch of the NFB.

Securities policy

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The commissions have removed all mention of gross points participation, and have added a new section on financial reporting.

Copies of the new policy are available through the offices of the provincial securities commissions.

Bijou Awards bow for shorts and TV prods

TORONTO — The CBC drama *War Brides* earned seven nominations, including Best Television Drama, while independent filmmaker Robert Fresco topped the list of individual nominations with five, as the nominations were announced for the first annual Canadian Short Film and Television Awards.

Ronald Cohen, chairman of the Academy of Canadian Cinema, and Pat Ferns, president of the Canadian Film and Television Association, announced the nominees for the awards, which will be known as the Bijous. The awards succeed both the Canadian Film and Television Awards and the short film category of the Canadian Film Awards, giving the Canadian film and television industries a second high-profile awards presentation to complement the Genie Awards, which annually recognize achievement in feature film. Cohen and Ferns also unveiled

the Bijou Award statuette, a 14-inch solid brass spiral sculpture designed by Canadian artist Louis Stokes.

The nominations were dominated by CBC and NFB selections. In the Best Documentary categories, only Fresco's *Steady As She Goes*, about an old man building ships inside of bottles, was not an NFB-produced film. The Best Television Drama Over 30 Minutes category was a clean sweep for CBC productions, with *War Brides*, *Running Man*, and *You've Come a Long Way*, *Katie* earning nominations.

Other top nominations were *Final Edition*, with six individual nominations, and *Running Man* with three, including an Outstanding Direction in a dramatic production selection for Donald Brittain. Top independent film to gather nominations was *The Olden Days Coat*, an adaptation of a Margaret Laurence short story by Atlantis Films, with four.

A multiple jury system was used to select the 200 nominees in 27 award categories. Eligible productions were pre-selected by English and French language filmmakers and forwarded to a total of 19 juries based in Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal. The juries selected three nominees in each production category, as well as pre-selecting nominees for the craft achievement categories, whose final three nominees were chosen by special craft juries. Also, the highest-ranked independent production (non-CBC or NFB) was forwarded to the Best Independent Production jury, which selected the final four nominees.

The awards will take place October 28 at the Harbour Castle Convention Centre in Toronto, sponsored by the Academy of Canadian Cinema, the Canadian Film and Television Association, and Imperial Oil Limited.

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