

Primedia and National Ballet team for a-v contracts

TORONTO - Alexander Grant, artistic director of the National Ballet of Canada, and Pat Ferns, president of Primedia Productions Ltd., have announced an agreement relating to the dance company's film, videotape, and audio-visual activities.

Primedia will produce adaptations of the National Ballet's repertoire, as well as consult and advise the dance company

on all matters pertaining to the marketing of the National's performances in media other than live theatre.

Discussions between the National Ballet and Primedia have taken place over the past year. According to a news release from the two groups, future moves may include the creation of a separate production entity which would handle all National Ballet film and video

recordings.

Ferns and Richard Nielson, chairman of Primedia, left Nielson-Ferns International, which they founded in 1972, this past summer to form their new production company. Since then, Primedia has served as a consultant to the Performance application for a national pay-TV license, headed by Jack McAndrew. They have also served as consultants to the Canadian

Association of Professional Dance Organizations (CAPDO), and done some production work for Lively Arts Market Builders (LAMB), a special interest pay-TV license applicant.

Nielson is currently completing *The Wars*, a \$3 million feature film based on Timothy Findley's novel and directed by Robin Phillips, which completed shooting August 3. Ferns is currently executive producer of the 13-part television series *Ark On The Move*. Upcoming Primedia production plans for 1982 include *Billy Bishop Goes To War*, a co-production with the BBC and the Colonial Repertory Theatre Company, to be shot next March at the BBC's Glasgow studios with original cast members Eric Peterson and John Gray; *Grey Owl* (based on Lovat Dickson's biography *Wilderness Man*), and *Heaven On Earth* (screenplay by Margaret Atwood and Peter Pearson), both British co-productions with Yorkshire Television; *Pélagie-la-Charrette*, based on the Prix Goncourt winning novel by Antonine Maillet, in a co-production with Société Radio Canada and Gaumont, the major Parisian theatrical distributor; *The Adventurers of Hudson's Bay*, a six-part dramatic mini-series co-produced with France's Téléci; and nine-part children's drama *The Little Vampires*, a German co-production with Polyphon of Hamburg.

Mankiewicz fails to better record with *Les beaux souvenirs*

MONTREAL - Luke warm reviews and an opening which competed with the baseball play-offs may have contributed to the lackluster performance of *Les beaux souvenirs* in Quebec. Playing on two screens (Montreal and Quebec City) for five weeks, the film grossed \$38,000, falling far short of *Les bons débarras* which was the first collaboration between director Francis Mankiewicz and Réjean Ducharme. Although this second film provoked lively debate in Le Devoir, the production by the National Film Board and Lamy Spencer never found its audience despite distribution through Les Films Mutuels.

SHOOT ALBERTA

by Linda Kupecek

"I've lost all the awards. I don't know where they go," said Terence Macartney-Filgate, producer/director of *The Golden Mountain: The Chinese in Canada*. "Bits of paper...but good for the next budget," he continued mildly.

If that is so, Macartney-Filgate should be optimistic: in September, he was given the Ontario Film Institute Award for outstanding contribution to film in Canada. With a screening and retrospective of his past films for Canadian television, he was given a miniature zootrope in honour of his work.

This is not the first award for Macartney-Filgate. In his long career, he has collected an Academy Award to Television Reporting, Cine Golden Eagle, American Film Festival Award, Grand Prix Cannes, Eurovision Television Award, Ohio State Award, and Canadian Film Award.

"Money's the name of the game," he said recently in Calgary. "No money, no film." He pointed out that the \$170,000 budget on *Golden Mountain* (the ninety-minute film documentary aired November 11 on CBC) was one-half the price of a drama per minute, and one-half the cost of an NFB documentary.

Golden Mountain was shot in Victoria, Ontario, Lethbridge and Winnipeg. Macartney-Filgate and his crew researched in 1979, shot for one month in June 1980, and edited in 1981, while he continued with other projects, including *Barker Fairly at 93*, and *In Memory of Norman Bethune*.

"I like to stir things up," he said. "I like to keep busy. Otherwise, it's boring."

Macartney-Filgate outlined the flexibility required for the *Golden Mountain* shoot. "The re-creations were shot in two to three days at great speed. I rubbed dirt on the faces of the railway workers because I wanted them to look realistic. I recycled people from one scene to another. I photographed it myself. At one point, I shot

from under an umbrella on my knees in the rain." In another, a Chinese laundry cancelled the use of a location, so he improvised a picnic scene instead.

Television confuses news reportage with documentaries, Macartney-Filgate commented. "News reporting records the event, while a documentary filmmaker takes certain things and gives them a certain emotion, tone, and feeling.... Documentary filmmakers are a dwindling band in Canada," he said.

Comparing documentary with drama, Macartney-Filgate said, "In a documentary, one is trying to find the structure of the film. You never know what you are going to get. A drama script is more defined." Also, "It only takes three weeks to

prepare a drama, but a documentary takes so much research.

"I would like to direct a drama, but have been told by the CBC drama department that I am not experienced enough." (At this point, the grim-faced CBC publicist from Toronto grew even grimmer.)

Of the rewards of filmmaking, he said, "The real reward is that the film has a life of its own."

His future plans include a musical documentary profile on Oscar Petersen, and a major series based on Pierre Berton's *Flames Across the Border*.

"Filmmaking is a vice," said the multi-award winner. "You can't give it up. Because you never really learn to master it."



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