



● *Circle of Two's* Tatum O'Neal and Richard Burton: a prime example of what went wrong

Although Burton is known to think little of his film roles in general, he gives this his best effort, hampered admittedly by the myriad defects in the film's execution. The same cannot be said of the minor characters - Michael Wincott as the boorish boyfriend, Robin Gammell and Patricia Hamilton as Sarah's dense parents, Nuala Fitzgerald as Ashley's old flame - with the exception of Kate Reid as Sarah's doctor, whose brief appearance cuts through the intellectual mire of the script with typical briskness.

Perhaps, however, the greatest folly in *Circle of Two* lies in the pretentiousness of Jules Dassin's direction. This script needed a light touch if it was to work at all. Instead, Dassin, perhaps embittered by years of exile from North America, the failure of his later projects, most notably *A Dream Of Passion*, to gain any positive recognition, and a sense of having been passed by, attempts to moralize. Thus Ashley speaks gravely of the artistic vision, and is seen to be betrayed by a gallery owner he once considered a friend. But Dassin omits to show any real indication of Ashley's talent, in spite of contributions of the distinguished Canadian artist Harold Town, whose work is used for the paintings.

A mention of Fima Noveck's contribution to *Circle of Two* is in order. In 1981, he was brought in, following the film's negative response in Europe, to re-edit the picture. His main intent, he later said, was to rid the film of its staginess. Thus much extraneous material about Sarah and her school life appears to have been excised, though at the cost of making the already thin character thinner still. In one area Noveck did considerable damage. Paul Hoffert's original score, which included performances by the Paul Brodie Quartet, Moe Koffman, Erica Goodman and the Bishop Strachan School Choir (see

*Cinema Canada*, No. 60), was almost totally removed in favor of a standardized romantic background music. Thus, perhaps the most exciting and interesting aspect of the film vanished, and in the last analysis it could be seen that *Circle of Two* failed for reasons that were obvious from the outset. It was dull, dull, dull.

J. Paul Costabile ●

**CIRCLE OF TWO** d. Jules Dassin a.d. Timothy Rowse, Frank Simpson, Sarah Miller Hayward, Jerome McCann **CFDC** trainee Rex Bromfield ac. Thomas Hedley, from the novel "A Lesson of Love" by Marie-Terese Baird d.o.p. Laszlo George C.S.C. cam. op. Harold Ortenburger **2nd unit photog.** Jean Badel edit. David Nicholson creative cons. Fima Noveck ad. rec. Owen Langevin, Jim Franck sd. asst. Randy Milligan sd. ed. Wayne Griffon, Dennis Drummond p. man. Danny Rossner **unit man.** D. Robert McCart **loc. man.** Gail Singer, Fran Soloman p. des. Claude Bonnière, François De Lucy p. des. Anne Pepper, Barbara Tranter asst. art. d. Joyce Liggett, Don McQueen **paintings,** art adviser Harold Barling Town asst. art adviser Brian Nowell easels W.H. Town scenic artist James Williams sketch artist Phillip Moody graphics David Johnston, Bruno Gywinski cost. des. Theoni V. Aldredge, Donna Thomas ward. Brian Sands, Muriel Sampson, Sarah Miller Hayward **ward. co-ord.** Gayle McLeod **makeup** Barbara Palmer, Ron Berkeley (for Richard Burton) **music** Paul Hoffert, Antonio Vivaldi, J.S. Bach **stunt co-ord.** Dwayne McLean **stand-ins** Roslyn Forsyth, George Cunningham p. asst. Robert Imeson, Andrew Adach, Ray Harris **pub.** Stephenson, Ramsay, O'Donnell p.c. Circle of Two Productions (Film Consortium of Canada, in association with Jerome Simon and Milton Zysman Productions) p. Henk Van Der Kolk **exec. p.** William Marshall **assoc. p.** Bob Rodgers **colour** 35mm

**running time** 105 min. **lp.** Tatum O'Neal, Richard Burton, Nuala Fitzgerald, Robin Gammell, Patricia Hamilton, Kate Reid, Dohann Cavin, Norma Dell'Agnese, Michael Wincott, George Bourne Sr., Leo Leyden, Elan Ross Gibson, Gordon Jocelyn, Bob Aarons, Pat Patterson, Brendan McKane, A. Frank Ruffo, Morison Bock, Bibi Casparly, Les Carlson, Linda Antonnacci, Eileen Kim, Judy Noble, Annette Stevens, Wendy Turman, Yanka Van Der Kolk, Elias Zarou, Larry Ewashen, Lee Majors, Ryan O'Neal (in original version only), Maggie Morris, Doug Smith, Pamela Hyatt, Jimmy Leone, Grace Stephens, Daisy White, Ann Butler, Bill Yack, The Bishop Strachan School Choir.

## Jack Darcus' *Deserters*

War, to judge by its monuments and celebrations, is something to be remembered. Not so the Vietnam war. Forgotten too is that the war in Vietnam was in an important sense also Canada's war, that some Canadians fought in it, that Canada's high-tech industries profited immensely from it. Now Vancouver filmmaker Jack Darcus has made a film that attempts to remember.

*Deserters*, Darcus' fourth feature film (after *Great Coups of History*, 1970; *Proxymawks*, 1972; *The Wolfpen Principle*, 1974) was one of the gems among an otherwise meagre offering of Canadian films at Montreal's 7th World Film Festival. With all the clarity of a suddenly recollected nightmare, *Deserters* propels one back, for a relentless 110 minutes, to "American 1969" with its trains and railway stations full of soldiery, the travelling salesmen of a nation at war.

Alongside such a train, two young grunts, duffel bags packed and Vietnam-bound after boot camp, are fleeing from a shadow. Aboard the train the shadow materializes into their drill instructor, Sgt. Ulysses Hawley, United States Army, marvelously portrayed by Alan Scarfe. Gum-chewing, boorish, with a slight southern accent, Hawley, a three-tour Vietnam veteran, is headed for a five-day drunk between shifts of new draftees. During the train-ride he terrifies the two grunts with macabre Vietnam jokes, and sasses a staff captain who can't help overhear Hawley's criticism of the conduct of the war.

Disembarking at an unspecified station, Hawley attempts to coerce the two to go drinking with him. They reply they first have to say goodbye to their waiting parents outside. The captain suddenly appears, telling Hawley his two men have just gotten into a car, and headed straight for Canada which is just up the road. "But they're my best men," Hawley says, flabbergast. "If those are your best men, this country's in trouble," the captain answers.

Just up the road, Canada is the office

of immigration officer Noel Manufort (Dermot Hennesly) for whom the war is a Heaven-sent opportunity to put the principles of liberalism into practice: to bend the immigration rules, and to offer shelter to deserving war-resisters. One such young hero is Peter (Jon Bryden), who somewhat hesitantly accepts Manufort's invitation home.

But Manufort's home is also that of his wife, Val (Barbara March), who if she does not share her husband's zeal for the cause, does on the other hand desire the 'friendship' of the young men her husband brings home, as she intimates to Peter when Manufort is called away on an emergency.

When Noel returns he has brought back with him yet another 'deserter', still in his sergeant's uniform: it is Ulysses Hawley searching for his runaway men. And so the scene is set for the ensuing confrontation between the Soldier, the Youth, the Liberal, and the Woman.

What transpires between the walls of the Manufort home is a domestic version of guerrilla war in the sense that, as in Vietnam, nothing is what it seems.

Peter is a deserter only because his college grades were bad and he got his girl-friend pregnant. Noel's liberalism is only this year's fashion in a desperate search for personal meaning: the year before it was Zen and pottery. Val's marital discontent is only sexual. Only Hawley's sham desertion turns out to be genuine after all.

In a Nietzschean transvaluation of values, Peter decides to go home and fight for his country; Noel's and Val's marriage irreparably collapses; and Hawley bitterly accepts the defeat of his militaristic ideals. But if the others can and will survive at the price of some self-understanding, Peter, one realizes at the film's end, will die, sacrificed to the remains of moribund national ideals.

But *Deserters* is also about *our* war within, the conflict between Canadian and American identities. If the Americans do have national ideals to fall back upon (Peter) or to rebel against (Hawley), Canada - which at one point Hawley calls "This tin-pot country that can't even get in on the action" - has only a weak liberalism as the semblance of a national ideal, one that threatens to collapse under the slightest pressure, exposing the cavernous nihilism beyond. And yet even this feeble facade offers



● Guerrilla warfare in a Canadian living-room: Alan Scarfe, left, and John Bryden in *Deserters*

enough of a refuge for Peter and Hawley to seek shelter, as a respite from the catastrophes of their national history.

In the age of disintegrating principles, Canada, perhaps, still holds the possibility of an interior - *Deserters* shows Canada only as interiors (Manufort's office and home). If this possibility of an interior, by its vastness, is crushing to the native-born, it offers to the voluntary exiles, to those who have abandoned the official ideals, a vantage-point from which some self-understanding can begin.

As a contribution to the distinct Canadian possibility, *Deserters* offers a glimpse of such a vantage-point. In the continental amnesia of these times, that is no small achievement.

Michael Dorland ●

**DESERTERS** d./sc./p. Jack Darcus d.o.p. Tony Westman art d. J. Darcus music Michael Conway Baker ed. J. Darcus fine cut/sd. ed. Doris Dyck asst. d. Bob Akester assoc./p. man. Tom Braidwood cont. Gayle Scott gaffer Roger Huyghe key grip Fred Ransom lighting asst. Paul Pollio set and props Sandy Arthur ward. Andrew Brown makeup & hair Linda A. Brown stills Nancy Waters second stillsman Patrick Hattenberger lead carpenter Thom Wells construction assistant Hugh Poole focus puller/loader Thomas Fillingham sd. rec. Larry Sutton boom op. Graham Crowell sd. mixer Barry P. Jones asst. ed. Cliff Garbutt p. asst. Paddy McGrath lighting Canadian Pro-Lite Ltd. electrical AC DC Lighting Design neg. cut. Original Conforming Services Inc. opticals and titles Westcoast Film Opticals lab Alpha Cine Service made with assistance from: The Canada Council, Canadian Film Development Corporation (CFDC) in agreement with I.A.T.S.E. Local 891, Vancouver, B.C. color 16mm, 35mm p.c./dist. Exile Prods., 1848 West 5th Avenue, Vancouver V6J 1P3 (604) 731-2503 running time 110 mins. Lp. Alan Scarfe, Dermot Hennelly, Jon Bryden, Barbara March, Ty Haller, Robin Mossley, Bob Metcalfe.

## Vic Sarin's Gurkhas of Nepal

This independent documentary by the well-known cinematographer, Vic Sarin, is simply a pleasure to watch. There are many moments where the film is stunningly beautiful, and its complexity makes it a work that stays in the mind for a long time.

The Gurkhas from the region of Nepal are hillmen who, for generations, have fought valiantly as volunteers in the

British Army. They have constituted a major fighting force since 1815, right up to the recapture of the Falklands. Often excluded from standard Western textbook accounts of both World Wars, the contribution of the Gurkhas has been formidable. Yet, we are living at a time when military prowess seems more a sad irony than a noble endeavor. This is the challenge with which Sarin's documentary grapples - to both honour the excluded from history and reveal the ironies of their situation. A less delicate and subtle filmmaker could not have accomplished this so brilliantly.

The film is told through the point of view of one Gurkha. Through his story, the larger historical and generational pattern is revealed. Service in the British Army is a way for the "hillmen of Nepal" to achieve honour and also earn a meager pension. It is expected that a son of a volunteer will also serve, thereby carrying on a tradition which has lasted over 150 years.

*Gurkhas Of Nepal* is filled with subtle contrasts which, in a very understated manner, gently expose the ironies of the culture. The drab grays of London where we see the solemn and formal changing of the Gurkha guard contrasts with the peaceful, languid scenes in their Himalayan village. The warlike demeanor of the Gurkhas in service contrasts with the gentle way of life in the village and the Hindu philosophy of acceptance, revealed in the voice-over narration. Throughout, Sarin weaves these contrasts like threads in an intricate tapestry.

Perhaps the most emotionally moving moments in the film occur near its end, where the old Gurkhas of the village gather to reminisce about their wars and display their medals for the camera. Something in the combination of faces and gestures, lighting and camera-work and composition all come together here to reveal a profound understanding of the human condition. There is a poignancy here that truly speaks across cultures and generations in the language of the heart.

*Gurkhas Of Nepal* is a recent winner in the 1983 New York Film Festival. It deserves wide-spread viewing and acclaim.

Joyce Nelson ●

**GURKHAS OF NEPAL** p./d. Vic Sarin cinematographer Vic Sarin sc. Robert Fripp ed. Tony Gell sd. Ian Challis narr. Siriman Ragu, David Caldrisi cons. Maj. Michael Burke colour 16mm running time 25 minutes, 1983 dist. Mobius Productions Ltd., 175 King St. E., Toronto, Ont. (416) 862-0255.



● Gurkhas of Nepal speaks across cultures in the language of the heart



● Graduation day for the women of Eastview Adult Upgrading

## Kit Hood's Don't Call Me Stupid

*You've got your pride  
A strength deep inside  
You've made up your mind  
To make it a better day  
In your life*

(Chorus of *You've Got Your Pride*,  
composed and performed by  
Alannah Myles & Christopher Ward)

One of the lesser, but nonetheless chilling, statistics is that 20-25% of adults in North America and other industrialized countries of the world are considered to be functionally illiterate.

*Don't Call Me Stupid* looks at how a group of women tackled their own problems of illiteracy and took steps to deal with a lack of education.

When Alison's children were small, she had no problems with her disability. Then they went to school and brought home written work, and needed a note for the teacher, and asked for a bedtime story to be read to them. And came the unintentionally hurtful remarks. "My kids kept calling me stupid - 'you're stupid' they'd say. Then I thought to myself, geeze I am stupid. I really am stupid..."

Women talk of recurring illness during childhood, of having only 10% vision, of moving around the country with a father in the Forces, as contributing factors to illiteracy.

The women in this film started by approaching the principal of their children's school. She urged them to find more women who wanted to improve their education and, within three months, Eastview Adult Upgrading was organized and had received funding.

The local school system and community centre staff provided support, a place to hold classes, plus help with child care which some needed while studying.

The struggle for education is moving to watch. The group received lots of encouragement from a wide network of people - family, friends, and various officials. But, most of all, the women upheld each other in this traumatic "back to school" learning process. The care and feeling, love and strength, they

gave to each other leaps out of the screen. There were tantrums, recriminations, depressions, but no-one was allowed by the others to give up.

In the end, we watch these women on graduation day when, suitably robed, they receive their hard-won grade eight diplomas before an enthusiastic assembly.

Researcher/writer John Helliker sat in with the class for six months, trying to intrude as little as possible. His attention to detail, and ability to delineate the individual characters of the women, shows the value of the time spent.

Linda Schuyler and Kit Hood are neighbourhood filmmakers, working from a store-front office and making films about the people and life around it. *Don't Call Me Stupid* calls attention at the local level to the dimensions of international illiteracy in a positive and gripping manner.

Pat Thompson ●

**DON'T CALL ME STUPID** d. Kit Hood res./sc. John Helliker cam. Phil Earnshaw eds. Tina Soomet/Kit Hood asst. cam. Chris Wilson sd. Andy McBrearty orig. mus. (composed/performed/produced) Alannah Myles & Christopher Ward p.c. Playing With Time Inc. in assoc. with TVOntario dist. (16mm/videocassette/print sale) Magic Lantern Films, 872 Winston Churchill Blvd., Oakville, Ont. L6J 4Z2.

## Rudy Buttignol's Inward Passage

*Inward Passage* was made for the Discovery Theatre at Ontario Place, Toronto, and played every half-hour throughout this summer. The three screens side-by-side as if to form one, were filled (most of the time) with images from three 35mm projectors, and Dolby sound.

The centre screen opens the film with a grabber - a helicopter circling over a Coast Guard ice-breaker chomping its way through the icy mouth of the St. Lawrence.

And it's off and away on a Cook's Tour of the 'inward passage' through the Great Lakes. The visuals unfold, on one, two and three screens. Montreal zips magnificently into three screens; Queen Elizabeth and U.S. President Eisenhower are interpolated in archive footage showing the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway.

Molten, red hot steel spills from right