

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

to left across the triple screens, and we're in Hamilton; and on to a quick look at Toronto. At the first lock on the Welland Canal there's a graphic illustration of a ship lining up and just squeezing through, and then aboard a Spanish ship as it negotiates through the system to the Detroit River and Windsor. The instructional journey continues - Sarnia, Collingwood, Thunder Bay, with glimpses of tankers and other large trading vessels.

And on to a thundering finish with a launching at the Collingwood Shipyards - excited children, work gangs banging in wooden wedges on one side of the ship, and the dramatic severing of cords with single axe blows. The vessel is launched, and a huge plume of spray washes across all screens amid yells and cheers.

This is a film made for a specific purpose, and designed to evoke an immediate and popular response in a general, mixed audience of all ages. Exceedingly competent and, in many ways, a model of how to give the government what it wants for its money. However... isn't it possible to make this type of sponsored film with a bit more flair, to find an approach along an untrod path, and to avoid what is now facetiously called "the NFB style"? The overburdened narration by Chris Wiggins, and the tired delivery, seemed to weigh down this short film.

First-rate cinematography, and full marks to the picture and sound editing even though the partial use of the three screens on a number of occasions was disconcerting. Intended for effect, or even perhaps to rest the eyeballs, in such a short film it wouldn't have mattered if there had been a continual cascade of images.

Pat Thompson •

INWARD PASSAGE p./d. Rudy Buttignol exec. p./narr. David Lancaster cam. Mark Irwin csc p. man./assoc. p. Howard Hutton sd. ed. Robin Leigh ed. Murray Battle music. Drew King loc. sd. Daniel Latour re-rec. Elius Caruso graphics/anim. David How p.c. Rudy Inc. (for Marine and Pipeline Office, Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Communications) dist. Ontario Place running time 19.5 min.

Richard Leiterman
& Peter Shatalow's

Doris McCarthy: Heart of a Painter

Doris McCarthy is an extraordinary artist and human being, now in her early seventies. One unmistakable impression that the viewer receives from this film about her life is that she has always taken risks and continues to do so. It is there in her paintings and it is there in the style of her life - that adventurous spirit necessary both for art and for really being alive.

Although McCarthy taught at Central Technical School in Toronto for 40 years before retiring in 1972 to become a full-time artist, she has been painting professionally almost all her life. Born in Calgary, she studied at the Ontario College of Art under Arthur Lismer, one of the original Group of Seven painters. But her landscape paintings have a unique style of her own. "I saw God in Nature, and that God was real to me," she says.

While having a film made about one's

life is a risk in itself, Doris McCarthy has here gone even further by allowing the filmmakers to dramatize moments from her life, glowingly portrayed by Canadian actress Linda Kupecek. Moreover, McCarthy herself creates, through the course of the film, a new work in oil - a landscape of the Canadian Badlands. We see her sketching on location, then later translating her sketches and memory into a finished work. Allowing the camera to trace this process in detail reveals not only the confidence of a superb painter but also the generosity and adventuresome nature of a fine teacher.

The style of this film is fluid and

intimate, like its subject. The filmmakers have taken great pains to illuminate the individual works: exploring the canvases, relating them to each other and to the land, and also finding a subtle composition or remark which will further reveal the heart of the paintings in McCarthy herself. This intimacy makes the film intense and poignant. By the film's end, we care deeply about this person who has shared so much of herself in her art, her teaching, and this film. A sequence in the closing moments of *Doris McCarthy: Heart Of A Painter* summarizes much. McCarthy, aged 74, is figure-skating on the ice: performing a series of graceful figure-eights for the

camera. The filmmakers give us a freeze-frame of her, poised as if for flight - having with one foot traced the symbol of infinity.

Joyce Nelson •

DORIS MCCARTHY: HEART OF

A PAINTER d. Richard Leiterman, Peter Shatalow p. Wendy Wacko cinematographer Richard Leiterman, John Walker ed. Peter Shatalow mus. John Mills-Cockell narr. Robin Ward assoc. p. Christopher Lowry sd. Garrell Clark, Brian Day, Glen Gauthier, Margaret Leiterman, Chris Wangler cam. asst. Christopher Bonniere, Jeremy Brigden, John Hobson colour 16mm running time 56 min. dist./p.c. W. Wacko Productions Ltd., Box 1651, Jasper, Alberta (403) 852-4728.

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