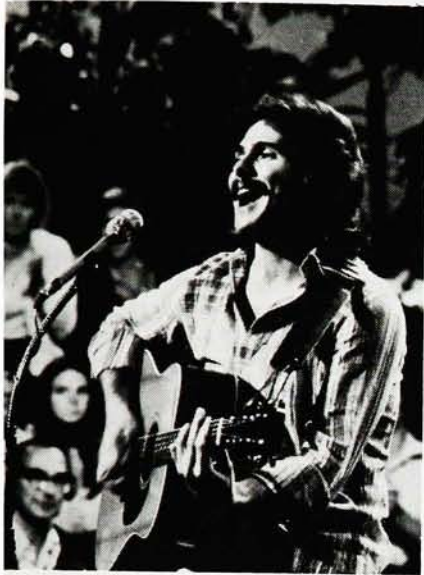


Kevin Gillis

Ottawa soundtracks



Kevin Gillis lives and works composing music in an old stone convent in a small town – population, about 1300 – some 40 miles from Ottawa. It *used* to be a convent, that is. Now it's a recording studio, an audio-visual set-up complete with gingerbread trim on the outside and a Yamaha grand piano on the inside. Kevin Gillis likes to do things that way. It's what's known as down-to-earth panache.

He is twenty-seven now and the oldest of a family of seven kids. He grew up in Ottawa and a few places in Europe, including Luxembourg. He has travelled and performed with Kris Kristofferson, Mary Travers and Tom Rush, and at one time trekked across Canada with a Canada Council grant to interview harmonica players, a project which was subsequently heard on CBC radio and may possibly become a book.

Kevin Gillis is no ordinary fellow.

"I'm very persnickety about what I do," he says. His reputation can back him up. He loves to tell the story about the time a client gave him a 30-minute slash print on a Friday and they recorded the final tracks for part of the film on the following Monday. Gillis works best when the heat's on.

What does he think about the film industry in Canada?

"One of the saddest things about Canadian filmmaking is that so many

people take the easy way out and go with stock music. It happens all the time."

What about writing theme music?

"It's got to capture the feeling of the film and get you interested."

A score?

"It has to be tied in to what the director is trying to achieve. It can't overpower the visuals. Its job is to underline what the director is doing. Music has its own way of drawing emotions out of people." Gillis should

know. His work includes the music for CJOH-TV's "Joys of Collecting," CTV's "The Diefenbaker Years," CBC's "Celebrity Cooks" and CBC Radio's "This Country in the Morning." He has also recently completed two 30-minute travel programmes in the upcoming "The World of Vincent Price" series. Gillis' next stop?

"I'd like to do a feature. An original soundtrack."

Brian Jeffrey Street

Arthur Lipsett

a close encounter of the fifth kind

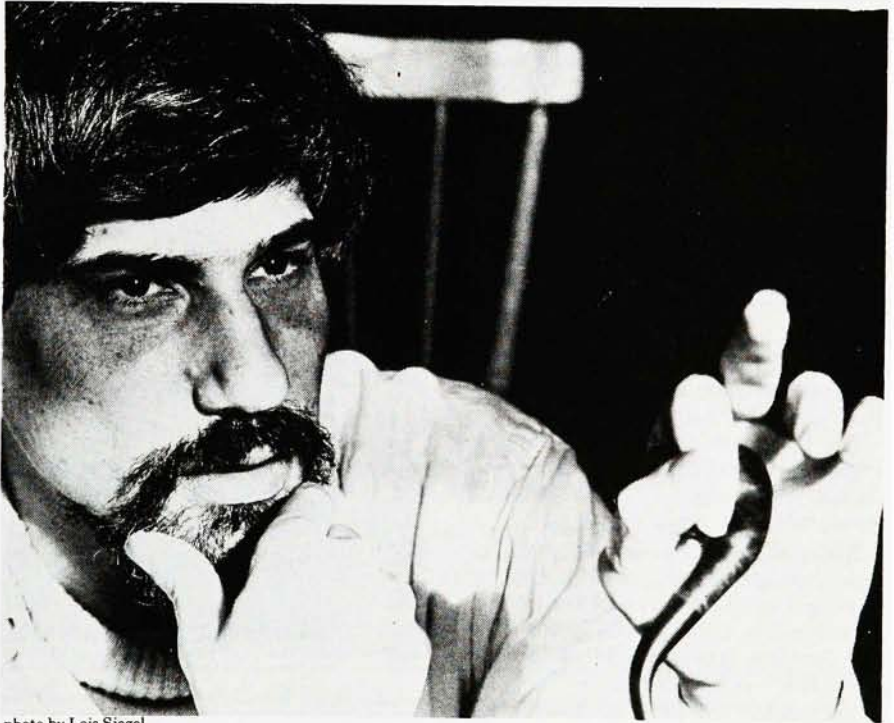


photo by Lois Siegel

It is not easy to interview Arthur Lipsett, because after a brief encounter with him it becomes obvious that he has rejected the standard, ready-made, machine-oriented, artificial way of life upon which most people pattern and pride themselves.

Arthur has come a long way and has seen and experienced some situations and ideas rather obscure to the masses.

His particular investigation seems to be *What is Life*.

Whether one is mainly concerned with his films or with the man, Ar-

thur's ideas are inseparable from the way he experiences the world.

The films he made while working at The National Film Board of Canada include the following: **Very Nice, Very Nice**, which received an Oscar nomination; **Fluxes; Free Fall; N-Zone; Trip Down Memory Lane** and **21-87**.

As if impersonating Rip Van Winkle himself, Arthur has emerged from a seven-year repose to once again examine people and what they are trying to be and who they might be.

His films consist of different bits of stock footage and photographs he took

INTRODUCING ...

himself, compiled in a form of collage with fragments of sound which present a new perspective on the activities of everyday life.

In his film, **Very Nice, Very Nice**, Arthur seems to question certain aspects of human life. We see clowns and football players, Kellogg's cornflake products and hundreds of people marching with a gigantic flag stretching across the expanse of a street in a parade, a Ku Klux Klanner, a chart illustrating the inside of a brain and a cake in the shape of a rabbit.

Why do people participate in all these activities? Is there a cohesion and a purpose? "There's so many ways of living lives," Arthur stresses.

We see a bomb exploding, a movie theatre audience wearing 3D glasses, a skull on the end of a stick... and eventually we hear a voice...

"I don't think there's a deep concern about anything... People forget what happened on Tuesday... A politician can promise them anything, and they will not remember what they have been promised."

"Why do we do all this..."

And then we see a crowded cityscape, traffic and a pile of worn out US Air Force jet fighters stacked to the sky. "And the situation seems to be getting worse."

It all relates to "Holding time together," Arthur explains. The viewer is forced to reconsider what he sees, hears or thinks he understands.

The final commentary one hears is a kind of chant of automatic praise emitted by a man... "Uhhmmmm, bravo, very nice, very nice."

When one is 40 years old and has gone through the processes of film, of investigating the interior of the media, then what is there left to do? Either you continue the struggle of investigating life - or you go crazy.

If a person has been in hibernation for awhile, he might not feel nervous about the imaginative side of filmmaking, but he might feel a little uneasy when he faces someone who has kept up with the practical aspects.

And now...

"I have no choice anymore. I do accept the way things are pretty much. The system is very tight - quite locked up. I don't think that much can be done. It's difficult for an artist to infiltrate into the government to do something."

"I went to the National Film Board quite by accident from art school to fill an opening in the Animation De-

partment. At the Board I experienced a great deal of opposition because there was very little work being done of the type I was doing. My work was in between - neither underground nor conventional. I always had a lot of pressure on me. It was difficult just to get the money to continue. There was always the question of the kind of film I wanted to make next."

Arthur is presently waiting for a decision from the Film Board concerning a series of five films for children.

"Because I'm not making a film right now, I'm terribly bored."

But in the meantime, Arthur is working with notebooks filled with ideas. He carries them with him and is constantly stopping to jot something down or to draw a sketch; for example, "What did the tomato say to the carrot." And in the context of a children's film, what could be more imaginative than perhaps to create a new possibility of language or communication.

Lois Siegel

Linda Beath distribution dynamo

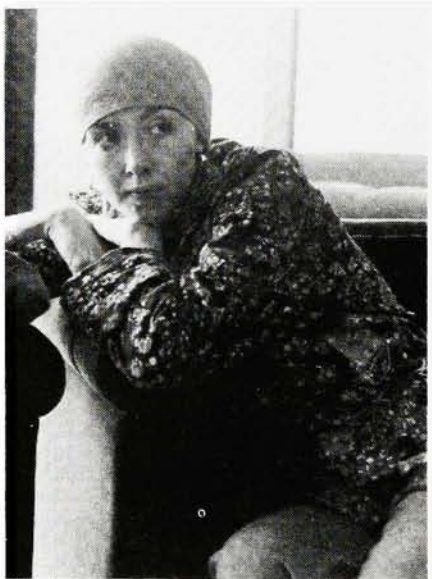


photo by Gunter Ott

Linda Beath has not always been the most popular distributor in town. Back in 1974, when she took over the management of New Cinema in Toronto, the company had just produced **Cannibal Girls**, gone through bankruptcy and been sold to a group of neophyte investors, none of whom planned to work in the company. Linda was young, smoked cigars and said what was on her mind.

People in the industry wondered where she came from and where she thought she was going.

Where she came from was the Canadian Film Institute. There she had set up the annual publication of *Film Canadiana* and took care of the film

periodical library. She had a B.Sc. in chemistry and math in her pocket but it didn't much matter.

Where she thought she was going wasn't clear then, even to her. At New Cinema she got the files in order, worked 6 months on the Women's Film Festival and took off for a 5-month vacation in England. She saw 12 movies a week that summer while she worked researching a catalogue at the British Film Institute. She also got seriously bitten by the movie bug.

Back in Toronto and at New Cinema, Linda heard that the Janus Film Library was up for grabs and decided to get it. And get it she did. It was easy. That was the start of her aggressive approach to acquisition and distribution.

But the rest wasn't easy. The public institutions were leary and so were some theatre owners. For New Cinema, **Bergman's Scenes From A Marriage** was the 'break-through' film. (When no commercial house would take **Scenes in Regina**, she booked it into the Public Library with great success.) Don Rugoff from New York admired her spunk in distribution and the word began to travel that Canada had a hot young distributor who cared about quality films and would give them her all.

Linda picked up **Cousin Cousine** and **Les Ordres**. This year, it's **Outrageous** and **J.A. Martin photographe**. The Janus Library has its steady clients, and the tide has turned in New Cinema's favor.